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AN OLD UNITARIAN CONVERT'S RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE.

NEARLY half a century has now elapsed since conscientious conviction by its marvellous power transferred me, very unexpectedly, from the Trinitarian province of religious thought to that which is termed Unitarian. There, in the former province, I stood, a young man, firm in the faith of my parents and friends, without the faintest idea that a faith so firmly fixed could ever be shaken, and in utter ignorance of even the existence of Unitarianism. But the solemn thought of personal responsibility commanded me, as an adult, to search the Christian Scriptures for myself, and this command was most strictly and gladly obeyed. Hitherto, my Scripture reading, although somewhat frequent, had been altogether fragmentary, one chapter here and another there, as circumstances chanced to determine; but now it was to be a consecutive and careful perusal of the entire New Testament. But whereas the results of a first systematic reading did not at all satisfy the most ardent desires of my heart, the perusal had to be repeated again and again, with the auxiliary process of making numerous quotations and notes. By the continued employment of these means, the Christian Scriptures were at length brought in one general view under my mental gaze, so that I could contemplate their entire circle from its circumference to its centre, and compare its various parts with one another, and each with all. By this comparison, however, difficulties and seeming contradictions, which my previous readings had never revealed to me, now made their actual presence known and felt, and demanded a full consideration; but, at the same time, it was hereby made distinctly manifest to my mind that there is most certainly one spiritual principle that can interpret and reconcile the conflicting parts and bring them into one harmonious whole, and that is, that principle of pure and perfect Paternal Love which fills up the great central section of the gospel, and permeates each of its subordinate sections and subdivisions. Now although many texts of Scripture, when thus taken as real vehicles of this spiritual principle, gave forth meanings which to me were altogether new, I was, nevertheless, necessitated to accept them as undoubtedly true, because they were actual exponents of the great fundamental truth that "God is love;" and

that meaning of a text which is the direct product of this fundamental truth cannot prove to be untrue.

Doubts and difficulties now rapidly diminished to vanishing points, and seeming contradictions presented new aspects, and I was enabled to dwell upon the general results of my investigations not only with great satisfaction, but with the deepest gratitude and the highest delight. Inexpressibly delightful was it to know that I had now learnt of Jesus himself, not only that his God and Father is the only true God, and the only proper object of true spiritual worship, and the fountain of mercy and love, but also that the only true God is *my* Heavenly Father, who of his own free grace and goodness offers me, and mankind generally, peace in the present life and bliss in the life to come, as the rewards of doing his holy will, and who, moreover, instructed, authorized and sent Jesus for the express purpose of teaching us all what that will is and how we may do it, and so gain an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. And, furthermore, it was inexpressibly delightful to see clearly in the light that Christ had given me, that God's plan of human regeneration and salvation is to invite and stimulate us to "behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," and "by his great and precious promises be partakers of the Divine nature" and "fellow-workers with God," and so "become one with the Father, even as Christ was one with him." With this light and knowledge, God appeared to me far more endearingly my Father,—Christ far more significantly my brother, exemplar and guide,—and Christianity far more simply and sublimely my inducement to love God and man, than when viewed through the medium of the belief in which I had been brought up; and therefore that belief could no longer be mine.

But here a new and formidable difficulty arose, that for a time compassed me about on every side. It was this,—the difficulty of solving the problem of my new position. Up to this point, I had never heard nor read of any searcher of the Christian Scriptures who had been conducted to the same conclusions as those to which I had been led; and consequently I seemed to stand entirely alone; and why this should be so, was the difficult problem to be solved. Conscience did indeed unceasingly remind me that whatever I had become in religious opinion, *that* the New Testament itself had made me; and whatever my new position might be, *that* the gospel had assigned me; and my internal monitor also constantly assured me that I was "not alone, but the Father was with me" in love, to stimulate me to trust Him, to worship Him and to love Him; and yet in reference to fellow-Christians I seemed to stand entirely alone. It was not long, however, before I discerned that there were professing Christians whose religious sentiments nearly coincided with my own, and

who, on account of entertaining those sentiments, were usually designated Unitarians. After much examination into this discovery and much reflection upon it, and under the potent influence of religious sympathy, my lot was cast in with this denomination of Christians, and in their communion I have now passed some eight-and-forty years. During my sojourn in this province of Christianity, many very singular allegations have from time to time assumed attitudes of stern hostility to the faith so dear to my understanding and my heart, and compelled me to stand forth a soldier of Christ in defence of the truth which I had learned of Jesus. One of those sturdy antagonists has constantly insisted with the utmost vehemence, that this faith is the sheer unbelief of proud, carnal reason, the infidelity of a stubborn, self-conceited will, that must inevitably exclude its votary from heaven and consign him to never-ending woe. Now it is a positively established fact that the faith thus denounced is distinctly set forth in the very words of the evangelist's record as having been uttered by the Saviour himself; and therefore Jesus is the author and finisher of this faith; and he who makes it the divine rule of his heart and his life, and thereby becomes one in spirit, faith and worship with the beloved Son of God, must necessarily be walking in the way and holding the truth and securing the life which Christ in the name of our Father revealed. But, notwithstanding this, it has been maintained with very great pertinacity and very little charity, that "Unitarianism is the frigid zone of religion;" and I remember to have heard a popular preacher reiterate this allegation, and at the same time solemnly assure a numerous audience that it would be as easy to extract sunbeams from cucumbers as to evolve any religious warmth whatever from Unitarianism; "and the reason," said he, "is this, that the Unitarian God is a mere figment of the Unitarian's own fancy, that never can by any possibility become an object of religious reverence, worship and love." Perfectly conscious as I was, while listening to these statements, that with respect to myself and the object of my religious worship they were the very reverse of the truth, and believing that they were so with respect to numbers of Unitarians, it could not but appear to me that the preacher had either asserted that which he knew to be false, or affirmed that which he did not know to be true; and as my mind revolted from the idea that any Christian man could assert from the pulpit that which he knew to be false, my only alternative was to conclude that he had affirmed that which he did not know to be true. That there are professed Unitarians whose religious affections are cold and even frigid, cannot be matter of doubt; but this by no means proves the truth of the positions attempted to be established; for no one will deny that there are professing Trinitarians, the temperature of whose religious affections scarcely rises above the freezing point. In fact,

every Trinitarian minister, in almost every sermon he preaches, addresses a large portion of his fellow-believers and co-religionists as cold and lifeless, and endeavours, by appeals to the understandings, the consciences and the hearts of his hearers, to excite within them some degree of religious warmth, and infuse into them some measure of religious vitality. If, therefore, the former system of religious belief must be made responsible and condemned for the frigid feelings of some of its professed advocates, the latter system must also be made responsible and condemned for the coldness and lifelessness of so large a portion of its professed partizans, and the two systems must be taken together as constituting the frigid zone of religion.

But is religion in reality a spiritual sphere, with various climates and zones, resembling the earth on which we dwell? If so, then the frigid zone of religion is actually as much a section of true religion, and as much the work of God, and as necessary to the perfection of the sphere, as either of the other zones; and consequently the human inhabitants to whom Divine Providence has assigned this cold region of religion, cannot on that account be less religious than the dwellers amidst the heat of the tropical climes. In this case, "who art thou, O man, who replest against God," and condemnest the work of his hand and the arrangements and dispensations of his providence? But if, after all, religion is no such sphere, and consequently there is no such reality as the frigid zone of religion, then to apply to any system of religious belief this phrase as a stigma, must be altogether unjust, irrational and irreligious.

But in the very presence of a moral demonstration that Unitarian views of the Christian religion are in their own essential nature neither a mere negation nor a cold speculation, but a vital faith which, when received into the heart, works by love, it has been urged with far greater zeal than knowledge, and far less benevolence than bigotry, that those views are totally powerless to sustain, console and cheer in the hour of death. Now it has been my lot to occupy a place at the side of the death-bed of many a Unitarian, but no one of those instances ever furnished me with any evidence whatever that the sentiments entertained were at all deficient in power to support, console and cheer in the hour of death; on the contrary, those death-bed scenes have again and again afforded me no small measure of gratification, by the happy hope and pleasure-giving peace which they displayed; and in my own individual case these sentiments have most effectually sustained, consoled and cheered, when on several occasions the hand of sickness placed me in the very vestibule of death. And having passed through the various experiences of inquiry and change of opinion, of controversy with others respecting the truth of the principles adopted, and of controversy with myself respecting the demands and the spiritual power and

efficacy of those principles, as well as of a constant companionship with them for so long a period, I am come now into the experience of an old man, awaiting with full Christian hope the hour when God shall call me home.

While the preceding particulars shew that, in my estimation, prejudice has condemned ideas that the gospel most plainly and positively enunciates, and that ignorance has endorsed the sentence, and Christianity has been outraged in the name of Christ, they also call to my remembrance the pleasing facts that I have all along experienced much brotherly kindness at the hands of those who differed in religious opinion widely from myself, and that I have often found that their questions and objections have assisted my investigations and added to my knowledge and gratification. Among those well-meant and useful questions, one of the more prominent is this—"Is there any advantage in entertaining Unitarian sentiments? and if so, what are the nature and characteristics of the gain?" What my own gain is, and what are its nature and characteristics, may be thus represented. In the first place, my adopted faith gives me perfect liberty and powerful motives to look around upon my fellow-men of every creed, and men of no creed, with full Christian charity and gospel goodwill, without the least apprehension that what *I* deem their errors of opinion will rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them to an ignominious exile from the abodes of rest and peace and joy: but such liberty and motives my former faith did not bestow. In the next place, from my present point of view, the nature, attributes and dispensations of God, all present one and the same unvarying aspect of effulgent benignity, unobscured by a single dark line of that inexorable wrath and merciless vindictiveness which some Christians ascribe to the Father of us all. And, in the third place, the power of my present faith not only transforms death from the king of terrors and the enemy of man into a blessed angel of heaven sent with a message of mercy to suffering and sorrowing humanity, but also draws from realms beyond the grave an assurance that I shall hereafter be welcomed into the many mansions of our Heavenly Father's house.

Now, freedom from the dire necessity of condemning others to future woe because they differ from me on points of doctrine, and freedom from the despotism of the dreadful idea that the God and Father of Jesus Christ will derive everlasting delight from the everlasting misery and woe of his human offspring, and freedom from the fear of death, and freedom to anticipate a perfectly paternal reception into the Infinite Father's blissful abode, must assuredly be some of the true characteristics of the glorious liberty of the sons of God; and he who has gained possession of this inestimable treasure, must feel himself laid under the most

solemn and sacred obligation to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free.

Very precious to me have these thoughts been through periods of health, vigour and active life; and still more precious have they been found in times of trouble and seasons of suffering and sorrow. But, most of all, precious are these thoughts to me, now that infirm old age necessarily derives less and less aid from the things that are seen and temporal, and is more and more dependent upon and sustained by the things that are unseen and eternal. And that others may know by happy experience that these thoughts are very precious, is the earnest desire of

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UNITARIANISM A PART OF THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.*

THE point of attack upon the Unitarian views in the great "battle of the churches" has recently been shifted by writers in the periodicals named below, who, with less of the odium theologum and a more intelligent discrimination, have selected what is apparently a weaker point in our armour than that presented by the helmet of critical acumen and logical accuracy. Their weapons are, however, directed against a no less vital part; and in stating that the Unitarian faith can by no possibility present the gathering-point for a Christian church, but only subsists for a time because it has found a home and a support in the old Presbyterian chapels and endowments, a thrust is made at its heart, which, if it strike home, may prove dangerous indeed to its very life.

Unitarians will perhaps admit that there are apparent grounds for this charge. While denying that it is inherently impossible for their faith to develop a church, as their opponents suppose, they will perhaps confess that, on the surface of things, they are not only deficient in that organization which the idea of a church is supposed to imply, but also partially in that internal and vital union which is the source and strength of organization. Our different congregations are, to a great extent, separate sticks, not bound together in a bundle, and the old man's fable might perhaps be applied to them by which he taught his sons that union is strength. Each individual congregation, in the happy phrase by which a late political party was described, might perhaps be called "a fortuitous concourse of atoms," with no coherence of parts. It is possible for an individual to attend one of our

* See North British Review and Christian Observer for May, 1859.

chapels for years without ever coming into personal communication with the minister who fills the pulpit; it is possible that two families should worship for years in contiguous pews without ever exchanging a word of friendliness.*

The candid admission of an evil will open the way to consider if its existence be a deep-seated and necessary result of our faith; and, in the first place, it may be well to examine what is meant by a *church*.

The word is known to be derived from *κυριακή* and to mean "the Lord's house." By a natural transfer of its meaning (analogous to the double sense of the word *meeting*, as both building and congregation), it has acquired the signification of the whole body of Christ's disciples, which is called the catholic church. Christ Jesus, as St. Paul tells us, is the head "from whom the whole body is fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth."† This church is only *one*. The venerable Hooker, the greatest English authority on this subject, tells us,‡ "That church of Christ, which we properly term the body mystical, can be but one; neither can that one be sensibly discerned by any man, inasmuch as the parts thereof are some in heaven already with Christ, and the rest that are on earth (albeit their natural persons be visible) we do not discern under this property whereby they are truly and infallibly of that body." The property of the true member of Christ's body is thus well defined by Dr. Channing in his Sermon on the Church: "Purity of heart and life, Christ's spirit of love towards God and man; this is all in all. This is the only essential thing. The church is important only as it ministers to this." But it is God, not man, who seeth into the heart, and judges whether the disciple possesses these marks of living in Christ. Jesus himself said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." "That our love to Christ is sound and sincere, that it cometh from a *pure heart, a good conscience, and a faith unfeigned*, who can pronounce," asks Hooker, "saving only the Searcher of all men's hearts, who alone intuitively doth know, in this kind, who are his?" The true catholic church of Christ, the communion of saints, cannot be discerned by man, and has therefore been called the *invisible* church. Of this invisible catholic church it is at least charitable, if not also correct, to suppose that every congregation of worshipers contains "the two or three members gathered in Christ's name," in whose midst Jesus has promised to be present. Thus Luther§

* Such a charge seems harsh, but the writer thinks he may venture to vouch for its accuracy. It may, however, not be applicable to Unitarian congregations alone.

† Ephesians iv. 16; cf. Colossians ii. 19; 1 Cor. xii.; Romans xii. 5.

‡ Ecclesiastical Polity, Book iii. § 1, where also may be found the subsequent extracts.

§ Table Talk, p. 169. Edward Bogue. 1848.

says, "The true church is an assembly or congregation depending on that which does not appear, nor may be comprehended in the mind, namely God's Word; what that says, they believe without addition, giving God the honour." Surely the Unitarian is not *necessarily*, perhaps not even actually, excluded from the church of Christ, in this its truest acceptation!

With the *invisible* is contrasted the *visible* church. Now, even before the appearance of Christ and beyond the range of his present acceptance, were and are some who seek to do God's will according to their light, and so are accepted of Him as members of the catholic church; nay, have been so manifestly accepted of God, that their fellow-men have recognized them to be so. Hooker sets this doctrine forth with a liberality which must astound the narrow-minded men who would limit the church of Christ to their own small modern sect. This visible church, says he, "is but one, continued from the first beginning of the world to the last end. Which company being divided into two moieties, the one before, the other since the coming of Christ; that part which, since the coming of Christ, partly hath embraced, and partly shall hereafter embrace the Christian religion, we term, as by a more proper name, the church of Christ. And therefore the apostle affirmeth plainly of all men Christian, that be they Jew or Gentile, bond or free, they are all incorporated into one company, they all make but *one body*. The visible church of Christ is therefore one, in outward profession of those things which supernaturally appertain to the very essence of Christianity, and are necessarily required in every particular Christian man." The children of the visible church "are signed with this mark, *One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism*. In whomsoever these things are, the church doth acknowledge them for her children." Now the Unitarian accepts Christ as his Lord, the teaching of the New Testament as his faith, and it is scarcely to be supposed, therefore, that any of the apostles would have refused to give him the baptism which is the outward mark of a disciple of Jesus. Who, then, shall say that the Unitarian is excluded from the catholic church of Christ?

But this visible catholic church is necessarily broken up into sections. Not to insist upon the fact that each congregation forms a separate unity in itself, it is clear that with the extension of Christianity divisions became necessary. In the apostolic age, each town and city had its own church, and the Acts and Epistles of the apostles abundantly shew that already in their day differences of opinion prevailed in different churches. In modern times, each country has its own church. The Roman, the Greek, the English, the Prussian churches, have each their separate local organization and local head. Differences of opinion as to points of theology divide Christians into Trinitarians and Unitarians, Calvinists and Lutherans, Baptists and Friends.

Different practices as to matters of discipline give rise to Episcopal, Presbyterian and Independent churches. None of these churches has a right, nor indeed a power, to say, "I only am the true church of Christ." Difference of opinion is always unavoidable, unity of the spirit is always possible. This distinction is finely indicated by St. Paul (Ephesians iv. 3, 13). He beseeches the Ephesians, as if it were an object capable of immediate realization, to endeavour "to keep *the unity of the spirit* in the bond of peace;"* but he adds, "till we all come in (*εἰς*, into) *the unity of the faith* and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of Christ," as though that were an object of ceaseless aspiration. Difference of opinion, according to Hooker, does not cut off even a heretic from the visible church. "We must," he says, "acknowledge even heretics themselves to be, though a maimed part, yet a part of the visible church. If an infidel should pursue to death an heretic professing Christianity only for Christian profession's sake, could we deny unto him the honour of martyrdom? Yet this honour all men know to be proper unto the church. Heretics, therefore, are not utterly cut off from the visible church of Christ." "By the church, therefore, in this question, we understand no other than only the visible church. For preservation of Christianity there is not anything more needful than that such as are of the visible church have mutual fellowship and society with one another. In which consideration, as the main body of the sea being one, yet within divers precincts hath divers names, so the catholic church is in like sort divided into a number of distinct societies, every of which is termed a church within itself."

Do Unitarians form such a distinct society of the visible church as may be termed a church within itself? It is alleged that they neither are nor can be so.

Now, that Unitarians form such a society in what may be termed the *invisible* sense, there can be little doubt. It is impossible to say who are true disciples of Christ. Yet few Unitarians will doubt, and few Trinitarians will deny, that Lardner was an apologist, Priestley a confessor, Channing a saint of the church of Christ; that therefore Unitarianism has principles upon which a definite church might be based, if indeed it does not already exist.

This is the precise point to be discussed; and here, as before, it must be admitted that Unitarianism does *not* present many of those marked characteristics which give vitality and endurance to other sections of the Christian church.

* Dean Trench beautifully remarks on this text, that the word *endeavour*, σπουδαζω, meant in the time of our translators to give all diligence as though hopeful of success, not merely to attempt hopelessly, as though conscious of the impossibility of realizing the object desired.—On the Authorized Version of the New Testament, p. 17.

The vitality of some churches consists in their having a definite system of church government, by which the separate congregations of worshipers are bound together in a close union beneath the government of a presiding body. Thus the Church of Rome has its regularly organized hierarchy, which has given it consistency and endurance through centuries, and sustained it against the blows with which Luther attacked its faith and discipline, and with which the monarchs of Europe have striven to undermine its temporal power. The Church of England has its bishops and archbishops, and the Queen as its head, with a parochial division of the country for the labours of its clergy; upon this organized establishment depends much of its strength. Our own ancestors had their presbyteries, which examined the candidates for the ministry and appointed them to vacant congregations,—an organization similar to that which exists among many modern English Dissenters. But of any such system Unitarianism is entirely destitute. Each congregation is independent in the management of its own affairs, and may appoint its own trustees and minister. We have, it is true, a Unitarian Association; but it has no authority, and meets with too scanty a support.

Another source of strength with other churches lies in their adoption of a definite creed as an exact exposition of their opinions, which secures that particular views will be preached by the ministers and held by the congregations from generation to generation. This is a banner and a battle-cry which musters its adherents together in union and strength. But Unitarians have no such emblem of being a church militant. It is their glory to reject it, and to say that the New Testament contains their creed, and that they do not wish to define their opinions in terms more precise than were used by Jesus and the apostles. They thus renounce a sectarian and lay claim to a catholic spirit. This principle has come to them in historical descent through Arian sires from Trinitarian forefathers,—the Two Thousand ejected ministers. If faithfully retained, continued study of the doctrines of Jesus and his apostles will lead to a still truer and completer Christianity.

The possession of property, again, strengthens and maintains a church from age to age; and to large endowments, tied down to the propagation of its views, Unitarianism can lay no claim. But it is better so. If true, God's blessing will give it more vitality than money can. If false, it were an evil thing that it should be sustained by wealth.

By the establishment of an inner "church," with power to add to its own number, who only are admissible to the Lord's table, strength is gained by some churches. From the Unitarian such narrowness is alien. He feels it is not his, but God's, to judge the fitness of any one to approach Him and join in the communion of Jesus; and he loses one source of strength because

he holds the doctrine and the practice of a really open communion.

If Unitarianism possesses none of these means by which a church gains strength and perpetuity, are there any others, and does it possess them?

Surely all these are but *outward expressions* of inward vitality. An episcopal or a presbyterian organization springs from an internal need and power of self-development. When the Reformers outgrew the leading-strings of Rome, they walked firm and independently as men; when independent congregations could manage their own affairs, they rejected the presbytery. Increasing intelligence and self-reliance have a constant tendency to distribute power; and all these different forms bear evidence of the existence of communion, fellowship and brotherhood. Where there exists such a brotherhood in any church, it will find and develop its own most appropriate organization. No one will say that the moral Unitarian, who thinks it of more importance to obey Christ's law of love to man than to speculate too curiously as to his nature, is *necessarily* wanting in that source of strength. But is he *really* so? Is our communion scanty and weak? Alas! it is to be feared that the most Christian spirit does not always bind together the members of our congregations in close communion. Friendly intercourse and fellowship between neighbouring and distant congregations is often too scanty. But this may in part be explained. As men feel individual strength, they seek for freedom from external rule. It is only when every man has learnt "to bear his own burden," that he begins to understand St. Paul's charge in the same chapter, "Bear ye one another's burdens" (Gal. vi. 2, 5). So soon as their own independent freedom of action is secure, men begin to feel that union is strength, and to join their strength without the assumption of priestly superiority on the one hand, or the jealousy of its exercise on the other. And the Unitarian church is shewing signs of activity in this respect. Our local associations give indications of life. The dry bones are stirring. The Lancashire and Cheshire Provincial Meeting and other Associations are following the lead of the West-Riding in addressing themselves to missionary effort. Mr. Channing boldly proposes, what others may have felt the need of,—a Unitarian BISHOP, and has pointed to a man whose fitness for such an office is indisputable.*

From what, again, does a creed spring up? From a firm conviction of the necessity and the possession of truth. But the Unitarian feels this need, though he does not, in that pride

* The writer of this article, when new to the ministry, more than once felt the need of some aged and experienced minister, whether called a bishop or not, to whom he might have had an acknowledged *right* to apply, not for *orders*, but for *advice* in difficult points. He has to acknowledge the kindness, in more than one instance, of the gentleman above referred to.

of reason which dictated and upholds the Athanasian Creed, suppose that he or any other man has yet exhausted the whole counsel of God. His humility in worship, his craving after more and complete light, are surely means by which he may hope to gain God's truth. But in proportion to the strength of his faith, will be his earnestness and zeal in its profession himself, and his desire to spread its benefits by missionary effort. In this respect, too, town and country missions give that sign of life which indicates the existence of a Unitarian church. It may be true, as is alleged, that they are not supported as liberally as those of other sects.* It is true that Unitarians do not frequent their chapels so much as the members of other sects; but a different explanation of these phenomena might perhaps be found in the *diffused* liberality of Unitarians, who can give their money and their attendance to other churches besides their own.

There is one respect in which Unitarians, in common with many other Dissenting sects in England and the German Protestants at large, are in some danger of error. They are apt to attach more importance to the preaching of the word by their minister, than to prayer and praise offered to God by the congregation. How often do men feel that they go to chapel rather for the sake of hearing a good sermon than of worshipping God in the psalm of thanksgiving and in the prayer of penitence and petition! A church which ranks its worship of God as of less importance than its instruction by a fellow-man, runs a dangerous risk; and so far as Unitarians make their *worship* an inferior part of their service, they lose great part of the benefit which is to be derived from public worship and from Christianity altogether.†

In conclusion, there seems to be no inherent reason why the Unitarians should not form a strong and growing church. If we take Hooker's criterion of "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," their direct resort to Christ and his teachings fulfil the conditions perhaps as completely as any other Christian church. If we look to our history, the prolonged existence of the Unitarian church in Transylvania, its gradual growth in England (attested by such confessors as Priestley and the seceding clergy from Lindsey down to Crearey), its more rapid increase in the United States, give considerable proofs of vitality. If we take the marks suggested by the passage quoted from Dr. Channing and inquire as to the purity of life of its members, their love to God and to

* There are, the writer believes, several contributors of £60, many of £30 a-year, to the Manchester City (Trinitarian) Mission.

† A recent letter in the *Inquirer* bears witness to the remains of a custom which the writer believes to be on the wane among Unitarians,—that of entering a chapel after the service has begun. He was shocked some years ago to see that it was necessary to hang in the vestibule of one of our best-known chapels a notice to request the congregation not to enter the chapel during the prayer.

men, which form perhaps the truest and the strongest foundation on which to build up a living church, each Unitarian, nay each Trinitarian too, may be left to draw his own conclusion. With the New Testament as the source whence they may freely draw endless draughts from the never-failing fountain; with a love to God which is deeper than creed-worship can satisfy; with a profound sense that obedience to the commands of Christ is the stepping-stone to a correct faith (St. John vii. 17) and the condition of gaining the Holy Spirit of God (St. John xiv. 15—37); with that love for their fellow-men which binds them in Christian fellowship with their neighbour, and inspires them to minister to the temporal, intellectual, moral and religious needs of their fellow-men, Unitarians ought to form the most living church in Christendom. The most living church—but not the most flourishing sect. That they neither are, nor ever will, nor indeed ought to be. To become so, would imply a loss of their catholic spirit, of their wide sympathies, of their progressive knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and would replace these by that which they dislike in other sects,—by a creed, bigotry, uncharitableness, by that Pharisaic spirit which would say to a Trinitarian brother, "Stand back, for I am holier than thou."

Do Unitarians possess these marks of being a true Christian church? If they do, the charge made against them is false. If they do not, it may be true—nay, it *ought* to be true; and if these characteristics be inconsistent with the principles of their faith, the sooner they perish as a sect, the better it will be for themselves and for their fellow-men. But from such an error of faith and of life, God grant we may become ever more free!

A. W. W.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE "WITNESS."

It is undoubtedly a very marked sign of the times as regards Unitarianism, that it is constantly "cropping out" in unexpected places among orthodox people and in orthodox periodicals. Now it is an orthodox minister who finds it needful to rush into print in the pages of an influential daily paper to prove to all whom it may concern (and others) that Unitarians are not Christians; now an orthodox preacher from his pulpit guards his hearers against the "pestilent heresy" of the Socinians, and warns them against its ruinous effects; now a revivalist piously thanks God that, as one result of the outpouring of the Spirit in the north of Ireland, even Roman Catholics and Unitarians are being converted from their doctrinal errors, and are relying for safety and salvation on Christ alone. The last "out-

crop" of this kind is an article in the "Christian Witness" for August, entitled, "History of Unitarianism."

The first question suggested by this paper is one as to the necessity that exists for Dr. Campbell to present his Congregational readers with a history of Unitarianism. Can it be that some of them have already got notions of this sect or party which are incorrect, and which this paper is intended to set right? Can it be that there is a kind of interest for such subjects in the Congregational body, which interest this paper is intended to gratify? Be the cause what it may, however, we have here a very compact history of Unitarianism occupying rather less than a page, with a commentary occupying a page and a half. The history itself is noteworthy, and, as conveying some facts hitherto unknown to Unitarians, may be fairly noticed in these pages.

"The history of Unitarianism, the *North British Review* has well remarked, is instructive, whatever may be the merits of its creed. Under various names, it has appeared in the church at intervals since the days of Arius in the third century, but it has never taken root." Will Dr. Campbell allow us to suggest an illustration on this passage, with which the "history" commences? Let there be a silken thread, upon which are strung various wooden balls of different colours; let some of these balls be broken away at intervals, and the string will be seen; but is not the string there even when it is not seen? Unitarianism is the silken string which reaches from the time of the apostles till our day; the various wooden balls, of which the doctrine of Arius is one, have obscured it at times and have at times allowed it to appear, but Unitarianism has always been the bond of the church of Christ. "Arianism," we are further told, "seemed ready to grasp the whole Eastern church, when it suddenly collapsed and disappeared. It was the growth of a speculative age so that it was trampled down and utterly extinguished under the rude heel of the Gothic invaders." This is, it must be confessed, a new fact in ecclesiastical history. It used to be believed that the Gothic invaders were, most of them at least, themselves Arians, and that Arianism, far from being trampled down by them, was extinguished, so far as it was extinguished, by the systematic persecution of the Emperor Theodosius. The essay proceeds: "The age of the schoolmen would seem to have been favourable to its re-appearance." We have been accustomed to take exactly the opposite view, and to attribute many of the corruptions of Trinitarianism to the age of the schoolmen. We further learn that "it broke out vigorously at the Reformation," apparently because "neither the methods of a true philosophy nor the laws of a just criticism were yet understood." "It established itself for a time in Poland and some neighbouring states. It even obtained a footing in the south of France, and had for a while a stronghold amongst the mountains of Switzerland—

where indeed it lingers still in the city and precincts of Geneva"—a fact not generally known, which Unitarians will be glad to hear. "It was introduced into England in the time of James I., but never throve. It established itself once more amid the decaying embers of Puritanism;" it could not, however, "even derive from them sufficient warmth to preserve its own vitality. The Arian form soon expired, and was succeeded by a creed which it would be unjust to designate Socinian, because it far outstripped the doctrinal statements of either the elder or the younger Socinus." And yet all through the article the term *Socinians* is used to designate Unitarians; not of course because the term conveys somewhat of reproach, but because the writer wishes to give us credit for something more than we profess, and does not like to confine us to the baldness and coldness of absolute Unitarianism. "Indeed, the creed of Priestley, the great leader of the party, was that of an eclectic philosopher, not of a Christian student. Perhaps he accepted as religious truth nothing but what is contained in scripture; but he maintained his right to sit in dispassionate judgment on the sacred volume, and to reject whatever he disliked." It might have been expected that even a Congregational historian of Unitarianism should know by this time that Unitarians never rejected what *they disliked*, but what, after every effort to arrive at the truth, they considered error either of text or of interpretation; but we are doomed to meet with continued disappointment even in our most reasonable expectations. "In the important (*sic*) state of orthodox religion his party multiplied; and secure in the possession of above a hundred endowments of the old Presbyterian chapels, Unitarianism still exists amongst us; it even boasts of intelligence, wealth, a high tone of private morals, and great alacrity in works of social improvement and secular philosophy. Still, it must be added, it has no pretensions as a Christian church; in the field of spiritual enterprise Unitarianism can boast no triumphs."

Thus far the history of Unitarianism. And yet the author of this essay says more than once that Unitarianism has no history! "Entirely separated from the historical church, Unitarianism stands isolated and alone." Again, "It has disowned history, and history has in turn disowned it." Why even the author of this account allows that we had our origin in the third century; and goes so far as to compile, for the use of Congregationalists, a history of Unitarianism; and yet this history does not exist! Let it be some satisfaction to the author to be sure that Unitarianism has a history; that its history is the history of the church; that the church in its earliest time was nearest to Unitarianism, and that at its most perfect period we trust it will also be nearest to Unitarianism; that we by no means disown history, and that it is not in the power of history to disown us. The thread of genuine apostolic Christianity has been obscured, but never broken; and that thread, we firmly believe, we still hold.

From the form which the history of Unitarianism assumes with our author, the comments may to a certain extent be anticipated. And yet we must acknowledge that the comment of now-a-days rather "damns with faint praise" than indulges in the wholesale invective which would have been orthodox some years back. "Whatever may be the faults of Unitarians, they are at least remarkable for their integrity." "Who, indeed, can regard the Unitarians with other feelings than those of the deepest sorrow, mingled with such esteem as private purity, benevolence, and an ever-forward zeal in promoting the temporal welfare of society, are calculated to excite?" "We dare not say that its tenets are less dangerous, but its features, viewed from without, are less repulsive." Is it possible that there is as much change in the manner of viewing these features as in the features themselves? Can it be that, by being looked at more carefully, the features have become less repulsive? It appears, however, from this testimony that private purity and benevolence towards our fellow-men characterize the Unitarian body; and may we not pardonably remind the author who it was that inculcated upon his disciples to keep themselves pure and holy in the sight of God, and to love their brethren as a necessary preliminary to loving God? At any rate, if we are to be judged by our fruits, what better proofs of Christian principle and practice can any section of the Christian church offer? And yet we want everything; we are yet to be "won over by the cheering doctrines of the cross." Are we thus, then, because of our Christianity, or without any Christianity? and if Unitarianism, being not Christian, can do so much, what more could Christianity do, beyond the profession of a belief in certain formulas of doctrine? And *is* this last Christianity even to the Congregationalists and Dr. Campbell?

Let us now, however, come to the condemnation. We "have no pretensions as a Christian church." Our "negations may secure adherents and temporarily excite controversy, but can never rear or nourish a church." "Besides, what is there in cold intellectual Unitarianism to meet the demands of the heart, the consciousness of sin, the longing for communion with God?" Not much, perhaps, but two positions—God is Love—and God is a Spirit. "Or what to satisfy the 'poor and needy' in those rationalistic trivialities with which it amuses the logical faculty?" and which give rise to the private purity and general benevolence referred to already in the essay. "In the biblical, or even logical sense of the term, Socinianism never formed or could form a church." "It was a party or sect." . . . "The sect is giving place to negative individualism;" and as a consequence of all these things we get a remarkable fact: "Socinianism, Unitarianism, Liberal Christianity, or whatever other name may be devised to hide its nakedness, passes away, not from the operation of external causes, but by a process of self-destruction, all the

more rapid where, as in the United States, its course is not stayed or hindered by conventionalism and the traditions of the past." So that Unitarianism, according to this writer, is actually falling off more in the United States than in England! Shades of all accurate historians! where can the author get his facts? It is evident he is at no loss for fancies.

What, after all, are the great points for which we are blamed? "Socinianism can never form a church; it cannot boast of its spiritual triumphs." Surely we have a right to require that an author who writes thus should give us the *biblical* and the *logical* idea of a church. We foolishly, doubtless, and in the vanity of our human reason, consider the logical idea of a church to be an assembling together for doing the Lord's work, whatever that may be; and we have some difficulty in distinguishing the biblical from the logical idea. Hence we have perversely held that a society, meeting on common principles and with the same object, for doing such work as is well pleasing in the sight of God, such work being either devotional or practical, is a church. If this be not so, we have a right to know what a church is. Again, does not the author of this essay believe that "spiritual triumphs" are valuable, not as giving rise to spiritual pride, but as causing men to act in a manner more and more worthy of their high calling? And, if this be so, are not the results which he points out as obtained by Unitarianism spiritual triumphs? It is time that this mode of talking of spiritualism and spiritual things should be replaced by a more rational and Christian form of expression, and that spiritual life should be recognized where it is seen in action, no less than where it manifests itself externally by the use and application of especial set phrases and technical forms of words.

If we are the "apostles of negative Protestantism," we are in any case the apostles of Protestantism. Surely Protestantism implies negation; a protest implies the denial of something; and surely also negation in matters such as these implies the assertion of the opposite. It has always been a favourite accusation against us, that our position is one of negation alone; but it should not be needful, in these days, for us to shew how false an accusation this is. In the face of the positive results of Unitarianism, even our opponents should be ashamed of reiterating this stock phrase of reproach. "Ex nihilo nihil fit," is an old maxim; and where some results are attained, they must have been attained from something.

We, too, in conclusion, can see in the extension of Unitarianism, both within and without the body, the confirmation of the sentiment with which the author concludes—"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever."

Sc.

REV. S. A. STEINTHAL'S ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT TO TRANSYLVANIA.*

THE entrance to Thorda is peculiar. Driving along the open country, you suddenly enter a wood through which there seem to be any number of roads leading to a strange structure, which leaves the impression of a huge barn employed temporarily as a bridge across the Aranjos. Through this wooden tunnel you drive, and for the first time since entering Hungary, with the exception of the payment at the suspension-bridge in Pesth, was a toll demanded of me. We passed very extensive-looking barracks, in which I was told there was but one company of infantry, all the rest of the garrison having been sent to Italy, and then dashed at full speed over the rather rough pavement of the town. A little brook runs down one side of the street, and as a large number of tanners were plying their trade along its banks, the perfume was not of the most agreeable character. Several of the houses looked very comfortable; all had jealousies to the windows, an absolutely necessary protection against the heat; vines grew up along the houses; almond and olive trees were visible over the garden-walls; and on the whole I felt surprised to see such an appearance of comfort in a small town like the one I was riding through. I afterwards learned that many of the houses belonged to the nobility of the country, who in the old days, when roads were worse than they are now, were obliged to make frequent halts on their journeys, and found it more agreeable to put up at their own houses than go to inns with questionable accommodation, and therefore kept up establishments in all the chief towns of the country. As I did not intend to make any lengthened stay in Thorda, in consequence of Mr. Tagart having made a full report of his visit there, I hurried from the house of the treasurer of the gymnasium, who had very kindly received me, to the building itself. To my surprise, I found the students, about 140 in number, drawn up in the quadrangle, and no sooner did I and the gentlemen who accompanied me make our appearance, than we were received with loud cries of "Eljen, eljen!" I bowed my thanks and walked round the low cloisters, looking into the rooms which open from them. I found here, as elsewhere, that the accommodation was of a very poor description, but was pleased to find that arrangements are being made to extend the building and improve its general character. The library is not very extensive, principally consisting of old books; amongst them I was shewn a volume of sermons by Francis Davidis, to whom the Transylvanian Unitarians seem to look up with well-deserved and peculiar reverence. From the gymnasium I went into the church, which, being very like the others I had seen, I need not describe. The members of the congregation and

* Continued from p. 489.

the clergyman who accompanied me pointed out the organ as being of a superior construction to most of those which I could find in the country churches.

Thorda is memorable in the ecclesiastical history of Transylvania, and should be in that of Christian countries generally, as being the spot where the principles of true religious liberty were enunciated as early as the year 1575. In a diet held in that year, a resolution was passed giving full freedom to all men to follow peaceably whatever form of faith approved itself to their consciences. Happy would it have been for Hungary had this salutary law been always acted upon! Happy would it be for the world at large if civilization had advanced far enough to permit this law to be enforced everywhere even now! The house in which the diet met at which this remarkable enactment was made was pointed out to me, and that plain edifice will always remain impressed upon my memory as a spot consecrated by the true spirit of Christianity, manifested long before the world at large was ready to receive its genial spirit of enlightened love.

From Thorda a good macadamized road led me in a couple of hours to the hospitable mansion of that true friend of Transylvanian Unitarianism, Mr. Paget. Here I spent some delightful days, surrounded by comforts to which for some time I had been a stranger, my stay being rendered more than agreeable by the genial hospitality and instructive conversation of my kind friends, Mr. and Mrs. Paget. From him I heard much of the difficulties against which our co-religionists have to struggle, as well as very valuable information as to the state in which they are at the present time, and the best means that can be adopted to improve their prospects. Mr. Paget is very deeply impressed with the great advantage that would accrue from the education of some of the students in England, as even if they were not immediately to take up the position of professors, their higher attainments and increased culture would greatly add to the influence of the ministry, and raise the Unitarians very much in public estimation. To myself it seems a false system to take young men immediately on leaving college to fill the responsible post of professors. They have not had time to digest and arrange the knowledge they have gained, nor obtained that authority which age and experience alone can give.

In the village of Gyeres there is no Unitarian church; the villagers belong either to the Calvinist or the Greek church; for my special objects, therefore, there was nothing to detain me, and yet it was with sincere regret that I left a place to which I shall always look back with pleasant feelings.

The next halting-place I reached which is of interest from a Unitarian point of view is Maros Vasarhely, an important town, the seat of the courts of the old circle of Maros, or, as the Hungarians called it, Maroschek. The congregation here is small,

not having a church, but meeting for worship in a private house. The community has land upon which it is hoped that a church will shortly be erected, when sufficient funds for that purpose shall have been collected. At present, a very respectable inn is built upon the site that is selected, and the rent is permitted to accumulate in order to help the building scheme. I was much surprised in this somewhat out-of-the-way place to find a very valuable public library. It was collected by one of the Counts Teleky and left by him for public use, his descendants being directed by his will to provide a building for its preservation, to make annual additions to it, and to pay a librarian. There is a reading-room attached to it, and any one may read there without any restriction except as to the hours. I was only able to spend an hour in examining its contents; and as its catalogue (the printed volumes) contains 80,000 numbers, I could only very cursorily look at the treasures it contains. The classics are very well represented in valuable editions; I found many specimens of the Aldine and Stephens' presses, and some of the handsomest editions of Baskerville, &c. The biblical collection is very fair indeed, containing polyglots and fac-similes of various MSS. Among the MSS. I saw one of the Vulgate, dating from the eleventh century; a codex of Tacitus from the library of Mathias Corvinus; and I learned that there is also a MS. of Socinus; but the chief librarian being unfortunately ill, I was unable to see it or to learn what it contains.

From Maros Vasarhely, my route led me through many of the Szekler villages, which are entirely Unitarian; but as I was in haste to reach Keresztur, I was unable to stay anywhere but at Gagy, a small village offering not much of theological interest, but very romantically situated at the foot of a beautifully wooded hill. Buried in trees, the comfortable houses made a most agreeable impression; the inhabitants being all Szeklers, more cleanliness and neatness prevailed than where the Wallachs are mixed up with the Magyar population, and everywhere bore evidence of greater prosperity and higher cultivation. I think it is not unfair to ascribe part of this improvement to the greater independence of mind which must accompany the simple faith of Unitarian Christians, arousing, as it naturally must do, a feeling of greater independence of action and self-reliance than can be found in adherents of the Greek or Roman Catholic Churches. The high road from Gagy to Keresztur is replete with interest; village after village is passed in quick succession; everywhere are Unitarian churches, and on every side you see in the distance the spires of other places of worship all raised "in honorem solius Dei."

At last we reached Keresztur, the furthest point to which my time would permit me to go; and through the broad main street we drove to the house of the director of the gymnasium, Pro-

fessor Koronka, the brother of the Archdeacon of Thoroczko. This gentleman has superintended the gymnasium for 46 years; unfortunately he is now suffering from what the medical men assure him is incurable disease, and he has thoughts of retiring from the important post he has so long and conscientiously filled. My companion, an old pupil of his, spoke to me of his merits with deep and loving respect, and his name was everywhere mentioned in the same manner by all who knew him. The gymnasium here is a newer building than either the one at Thorda or at Klausenburg; but even here I could not help being struck with the absence of what we should call necessary comforts. The students, however, seemed fine, healthy young men, and I can vouch for the soundness of their lungs at least, as they gave me a most hearty welcome, their eljens echoing from the vaulted roof of the auditorium in which they received me. I addressed a few words to them in German, encouraging them in their studies, and dwelling especially on the importance of maintaining in its well-deserved honour the reputation of that faith which we held in common, and which their ancestors had made so many sacrifices to preserve and propagate. The clergyman of the place, the Rev. Sándor Péterfi, very kindly gave me some sermons which he had printed, and expressed a hope that I should some day be able to understand the language in which they are written.

And now my homeward route began. To some extent I traversed the same ground over which I had come; but one or two incidents were so novel in their character, that I cannot refrain mentioning them ere I close this report. Soon after leaving Gagy, the road led up a long ascent, at the summit of which I could see a group of carriages and gentlemen assembled. To my surprise, I found on reaching the top of the hill that the gathering was in my honour. The Archdeacon of the district, the Rev. D. Arkosi, his brother, the Rev. M. Arkosi, clergymen of Bözöd, and several other Unitarians of the neighbourhood, having heard that I should be travelling through the district, had met me some two miles from Bözöd, and welcomed me most cordially, the Rev. M. Arkosi in a few words of English, a language which he had studied while undergoing some years' imprisonment for a political offence. After an exchange of greetings and having been introduced to the gentlemen around, we again seated ourselves in our carriages, and at a full gallop we went down the hill to the village in which Mr. Arkosi labours as a pastor. In the street I found the people all standing at their cottage doors to welcome the English minister, and a cordial reception was afforded me, such as I never could have expected and as I never could have deserved. At the parsonage the chief persons of the village assembled, and there the Archdeacon and his brother in turn expressed their sense of gratitude to their English brethren for the interest they had shewn in Transyl-

vanian affairs, and begged me to believe that the enthusiasm I had noticed was the sincere expression of their feelings towards us. I found it very difficult to give an adequate reply to the addresses which were delivered, but assured our friends of the deep respect we all felt in England for the sacrifices they had made for their faith, and the great hopes we entertained that such efforts would not be made in vain, for the blessing of our Heavenly Father must rest upon such earnest labourers in his vineyard. After I had spoken, a young lady, in the name of her companions who surrounded her, presented me with a bouquet of flowers; and I could not help mentally comparing the simple but enthusiastic cordiality of the whole scene with the somewhat cold and undemonstrative character of one of our meetings. I fear that the Hungarian gentlemen who have so lately visited this country must have thought us very cold-blooded, when they compare the reception one of our ministers receives in Hungary with that offered them in London, cordial though that was. There was in the whole proceeding at Bözöd nothing that seemed affected or exaggerated at the time, but the enthusiasm of the Hungarian character made all natural and appropriate, although an English Domestic Missionary could not avoid some curious feelings during an ovation of which he is not very likely ever again to be the object.

From Bözöd I was accompanied by the same cavalcade that met me on entering the village for a couple of miles, and parted from my warm-hearted friends with sincere regret. We soon left the high road, along which our way had hitherto run, and passed through several small villages, all of the Unitarian confession, although the names of some were rather orthodox in character, one of them even rejoicing in the euphonious name of Szent Háromság, or Holy Trinity. At last, after night had overtaken us, we found our way to Szent Gerlicze (Holy Dove), a village at which the Archdeacon of Marusi, the Rev. G. Farkas, resides. At his house I found a large number of gentlemen assembled to meet me, and the usual scene of congratulations and friendly speeches followed. We remained together till late at night, discussing the general position of affairs in Transylvania, and strengthening each other by mutual sympathy and friendly converse. The parsonage at Szent Gerlicze is about to be rebuilt on a more extensive scale by the congregation, which seems to be in a very flourishing condition, and to be supported by men of a higher rank and education than I found in most of the villages. The church lies on a small eminence, and the view from the churchyard is most pleasing, overlooking a vast extent of well-cultivated ground, bounded on every side by ranges of picturesque hills. On entering the church itself, I found that the villagers had been busy from early dawn decorating the edifice with the graceful flowers of the white acacia.

From every side the blossoms hung, making the place look like a grove. I much regret that my inability to speak Hungarian prevented my thanking the friends whose time had thus been spent in doing honour to my mission, but I begged the Archdeacon to undertake this duty for me.

From this spot my road lay altogether over ground that I had traversed before; and as my time was now very limited, I had to hasten on as much as possible, so that I might reach London in time for the annual meeting of the Association.

Having thus sketched the route and the chief places which I visited while in the Unitarian district of Transylvania, I must now in conclusion state the general impression left upon my mind by my visit to the churches and my intercourse with the clergy and members of the various communities which I have seen.

I have received a very favourable idea of the general moral tone and spirit of all the Unitarians; they seemed to be of independent character, lovers of their country, high-principled and honourable in their affairs. As a general rule, the education of the children of their communities is well attended to, each church having its school, with an educated and trained teacher. The result of this is evident. A gentleman in one of the many bureaux of the government, not a Unitarian himself, informed me that if he has any legal communication with any of the peasantry, after asking the usual formal questions as to name, age, &c., his next inquiry is, To what confession do you belong? If the man says Catholic, he asks, Can you read and write? and generally receives a reply in the negative. If the man is a Lutheran or Calvinist, he finds that in most cases he can both read and write. If he is a Unitarian, he asks no questions, because he knows that all Unitarians are well grounded in the rudiments of knowledge. I found that among the officials in the old Transylvanian government, the Unitarians had a large proportion of the situations. Since 1849, under the new régime, different qualifications are required, and the Unitarians are not so much sought after. The Secretary of the National Academy of Hungary, himself an author of no small repute, told me that the names of many Unitarians stood high in the history of Hungarian literature and science, as, especially in former years, intellectual culture was very highly esteemed among that body of Christians. Various causes have combined to lower the standard of learning among the later generations of our brethren; but I am glad to notice signs of a revival of literature, and trust that in a few years we shall find some men arising to uphold the ancient reputation earned by the Transylvanian Unitarians of former years.

Free thought has been very much hampered among the clergy by the *Summa Theologiæ* used by the "*Confessio Fidei Christianæ Secundum Unitarios*" (printed at full length in the introduction to Dr. Rees' *Racovian Catechism*). Every minister

gives by implication his adhesion to these documents, while I found no one who believed them in a literal sense. It too often happens, in cases where creeds are imposed upon men, that the communities upon which they are forced outgrow their limits, and, unless reforms are admitted, an unnatural mode of interpretation, or a careful study of writings like the Rev. Mr. Jowett's essay upon Casuistry, is needed to reconcile the relation of teachers to their own church. The symbolic books I have named above do not therefore give anything like a fair view of the theological position of the Unitarians in Hungary. The books are an evident attempt to approach as near to the orthodox creeds as could be done without giving up the essential points of Unitarian belief. I find, for instance, in the *Confessio Fidei*, "*Christum ceu æternum regem, ac Dominum nostrum (cui a Deo Patre qui eum à mortuis excitavit, data est omnis in cœlo et in terra potestas) supplices divino cultu adoramus, et invocamus;*" while at the present time the strictest humanitarian amongst us would not more strongly object to worship Christ than do the clergymen whom I met. As a general rule, I found that a rationalistic interpretation of the Scriptures prevails among all classes, not being confined to the clergy, though perhaps more completely carried out by them. The German theologians whom I heard named with especial honour were Semler and Bretschneider, the admiration of the latter proving, it seemed to me, that some progress towards a more spiritual faith was being made, but that more might still be desired. It appeared to me that, in spiritualizing the prevailing theology, the plan of a scholarship at Manchester New College would be of essential service. The students would learn, as many of our ministers can thankfully acknowledge they have done from the course pursued at that institution, how reason and faith must be combined in the adoption of a spiritual view of the teachings of God in Christ. Earnestly do I hope that this plan of uniting the two churches of England and Transylvania may soon be more than a mere expectation, and the connection of the two bodies may be consolidated by an interchange of religious life and thought.

That there are differences among the churches in Transylvania, as there are here, I do not doubt; but at the present time everything like public discussion or public controversy is so strictly prohibited, that the divergences of belief are not seen, if they do exist. I was, however, fortunate enough to trace one rather remarkable sect as still existing in some of the villages of Transylvania, whose remarkable views render them interesting to us, especially as in the Seventh-day Baptists, one church of whom is, I believe, in connection with our body, we can find certain analogous practices: I allude to a sect known in Transylvania under the name of "*Sabbatarii*." Their chief peculiarities all arise from one source,—their belief in the non-abrogation of the

Jewish law. As far as they can, therefore, they adhere to the ceremonies and rites of the synagogue. They meet for worship on the Saturday; they keep up the distinction of clean and unclean meat; at their own private meetings for worship they keep their heads covered. Their history is curious: the first trace we find of them is under the celebrated Grand Duke of Transylvania, Gabriel Bethlen. He was a Calvinist himself, but his Chancellor, Simon Pecsí, was known as a Unitarian. On account of the high talent he had displayed in early life, the Unitarian church of Klausenburg had sent him to Germany to study there, and such good use did he make of the years he spent there, that on his return he rose to the high office which I have said he filled under the reign of Gabriel Bethlen. While in Germany, he had devoted himself to the study of Hebrew and Jewish antiquities under some of the most learned rabbis whom he could find, and was so imbued with the lessons he had learned from them, that he attempted to found a fifth *religio recepta* in Transylvania,—the Sabbatarii. This was, however, impossible, as the national feeling manifested itself very strongly against his judaizing tendencies. The Chancellor was obliged to retire to his country seat, giving up all connection with public affairs, and taking up his residence near Bözöd, ended his days there. It is curious that in the neighbourhood of Bözöd there are still several families holding the same views as the Chancellor. On the retirement of Pecsí, the sect was not publicly attacked; but its members quietly conformed to the predominant party in their district, privately keeping up their meetings for worship and living in accordance with their views. As the Unitarians agreed with them in their leading doctrine of the strict Unity of the Godhead, they most frequently joined them, and by this means the Unitarians themselves got into disrepute, being charged with judaizing. To clear themselves from this charge, the leading clergy of the Unitarians, at the Diet of Deéz, brought strong accusations against the Sabbatarii, and I regret to say with only too much success. The liberal feeling expressed at Thorda in 1575, was forgotten. Some of the unfortunate heretics were imprisoned, some stoned, their property being confiscated in cases of contumacy. The profession of faith in the persecuted doctrines was made a capital offence, and every step taken to crush the new sect out of existence. But errors of opinion are rarely completely extinguished; the sect still exists in secret. The fact of its existence was made public in a manner which redounds very much to the credit of the Transylvanian government prior to 1849. It happened that in the University library at Pesth an old MS. hymn-book was found. The gentleman who discovered it, being much struck by the strange doctrines contained in the hymns, laid a selection of them before the Hungarian Academy at a sitting when Count Teleky, who had been

Governor of Transylvania, was presiding. On hearing the hymns read, that gentleman immediately declared that these must be hymns of the Sabbatarians; that while he had been Governor, several clergymen of different denominations had sent in accusations to the authorities, charging certain persons with holding the very doctrines maintained in the hymns; that the government had, however, declined taking any steps until the sectaries should by any overt act render themselves amenable to the law. I have translations of some of these hymns, taken from a second MS. found in the College library at Klausenburg. The translation has been made by a friend of mine, Mr. L. Csernátöny, to whom my best thanks are due for the trouble he has taken.

Various theories have been broached as to the true origin of this sect, but I cannot say that I have heard any that is in all respects satisfactory. Professor Kriza is engaged in researches upon this topic, and I trust that he may be able to throw light upon what is at present a very dark portion of Unitarian history.

And now I must bring these lengthened notes to an end. I have avoided as much as possible the introduction of anything but the record of plain matters of fact, leaving my readers to draw their own conclusions; but before I lay down my pen I would add, that, apart from all theological considerations, the journey which I was privileged to make was replete with interest. The scenery through which I passed, the men whose acquaintance I made, the associations connected with the places which I visited, in their novel character so completely unlike all I have ever seen in other parts of Europe, made the six weeks I spent in Hungary pass in continual excitement. If I have returned with deeper feelings of attachment to the secured freedom of England, it has also been with deepened sympathies for a noble race that has shewn itself worthy of equal freedom to our own, and whose past history gives good ground for hope that that freedom cannot with impunity be long withheld.

ON THE PROEM OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.

AFTER the many efforts that have been made to solve the difficulty involved in the construction of the Proem of St. John's Gospel, it may seem presumptuous to advance an entire new theory upon that subject; but as I feel strongly convinced of its soundness, I venture to hope that room will be made for it in your valuable publication.

In the Rev. Dr. Oliver's "*Landmarks of Freemasonry*," it is narrated that "the ancient Jewish rabbins inform us that at the building of the second Temple at Jerusalem, in preparing the foundations for the new erection, the workmen discovered a

secret vault in which was found a scroll, the writing on which was identical with the Proem of St. John's Gospel; and that this fact was accepted as true by Philostorgius and Nicephorus, both of the 4th century; and which received further confirmation in the Eleucidarium ascribed to St. Austin, Archbishop of Canterbury (of the 6th century), chap. 24." See "Historical Landmarks of Freemasonry," Vol. II. p. 437, published in 1846, by "the Rev. Geo. Oliver, D.D., Vicar of Shopwick, Incumbent of the Collegiate Church of Wolverhampton, Domestic Chaplain to the Right Honourable Lord Kensington, Provincial Grand Master for Lincolnshire," &c. &c.

Here I submit that it may be safely assumed that so highly respectable and trustworthy a person as Dr. Oliver has not misstated the authorities referred to by him; and as those authorities are accessible and may be examined for greater satisfaction, the correctness of Dr. Oliver's statement should be credited till disproved, and certainly that statement receives strong apparent corroboration from the composition of the Proem itself, which is unlike any other part of St. John's Gospel, there being in the Proem an obviously rythmetical order, not found elsewhere; every succeeding paragraph commencing with the object of the preceding one, (i. e.) *Εν αρχη ην ο λογος (word); και ο λογος (word) ην προς τον θεον (God); και θεος (God) ην ο λογος (word); ουτος, the same (i. e.) word, ην εν αρχη προς τον θεον, &c.*

Here it is obvious, by the rythmetical construction of the Proem, that the middle clause must, to suit the metre, be translated, not "the word was God," but rather, "God was the word," in the same consecutive order in which those words stand in the Greek, the parallel wording obviously requiring it; and we find it so translated by Tyndale, Coverdale and other early Protestant translators, who (unlike their successors) had no motive for distorting and turning the literal rendering out of its natural order to bolster up a dominant creed. But it may naturally be objected that the words, "God was the word," convey no clear or definite sense, and this objection must be admitted; but if we may rely on the relation of the authorities quoted by Dr. Oliver in the foregoing extract, which I submit are full worthy of reliance, we must seek for a solution of the difficulty in question from the Hebrew, and not from the Greek, which latter must have been a mere translation from the Hebrew, because it would be utterly absurd to suppose that an inscription found under the ancient Jewish temple was in any other language than Hebrew. It is therefore to Hebrew, and not to Greek, that we must look for the true rendering of this much-disputed passage. And the object of the present effort is to restore that passage to its original state, which I shall attempt by adopting the Hebrew words which are equivalent to those

used in the Greek, and then shew the import of those words in subjection to the rules of Hebrew grammar. And in doing this, I shall make use of English instead of Hebrew letters, the better to enable your general readers to comprehend the argument.

In such a restored rendering, the Hebrew word equivalent to the Greek *θεος* (God), would be ALEIM or AL; and the Hebrew word equivalent to the Greek *λογος* (word) would be DBR, that being the Hebrew word generally translated *λογος* in the Septuagint, when used in connection with God or the Lord; and Parkhurst, in his Heb. Lex., asserts that the Hebrew DBR is identical with *λογος*. And as the word *θεος* in this middle clause of the Proem is without the article which attends that word in the clauses both before and after it, its omission must have had a peculiar meaning. That meaning will appear on restoring the Hebrew equivalent to the Greek, which requires that the word ALEIM should be in regimen to the word DBR. But here, for the information of your general readers, it is necessary to explain that there is a rule in Hebrew grammar, providing that where two nouns are connected in the same sentence, the one which has reference to the other is said to stand in regimen or subserviency to that other; in which case, as a sign of that subserviency, the final letter is dropped, and thus ALEIM would become ALEI; and such regimented noun would then subserve the other noun, in the nature of an adjective, expressive of its quality or character. The Hebrew parallel passage would then read thus, in transposition with the Greek *λογος* and *θεος*: "In the beginning was E-DBR (*ο λογος*), and E-DBR (*ο λογος*) was with E-ALEIM (*ο θεος*), and ALEI (*θεος*) (dropping the final M, and omitting the definite article, E) was E-DBR (*ο λογος*)."

In this manner the ALEI would not be rendered "*the God*," like E-ALEIM and its Greek equivalent, *ο θεος*, but as an adjective, signifying *god-like* or *divine*; and therefore the word *θεος*, without the article, was most significantly used by the translator from Hebrew to Greek, to shew that it represented a Hebrew noun of a subservient character, and that just as ALEI was not equal in import to E-ALEIM, so *θεος* was not to be taken as equal to *ο θεος*.

Your general readers will here perceive that the English words equivalent to the Greek, in a strictly literal English translation, would be as follows:

"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with *the* God, and God (omitting the article *the*) was the word. The same was in the beginning with *the* God." But as the Saxon word *God* or *Gode* is not directly significant of Deity, but only of a divine attribute, (i.e.) *good*, it perfectly harmonizes with ALEI and *θεος*, as being expressive of only a divine attribute, and not of God per se; and therefore the fair assumption is that

the original translators into English intended to use the term *God* only in its strict Saxon import of *good*.

The method I have pursued appears to me to give the true origin and correct reading of the passage in question, and which accords with the opinion of the celebrated ORIGEN (A.D. 230), who says, "He who is God of himself is *the* God, ο θεος; even as our Saviour affirms in his prayer to his Father, 'that they may know thee, *the* only true God,'—τον μονον αληθινον θεον; but whatsoever else is God or divine, is not ο θεος, but θεος only." See Origen, Comment., Vol. II. p. 47.

This view receives confirmation from St. John x. 34 and 35, "I said ye are gods, θεοι. If he called them gods, θεοι [both being without the article] unto whom the word of *the* God, του θεου, came," &c., θεοι meaning of course inspired or spiritual-minded persons, and not *gods* in the supreme sense, which is obviously denoted by the absence of the Greek article as applied to men, and its presence when applied to God. And just so the intention of the translator from Hebrew to Greek of the passage in question must have been, in like manner, to denote the inferior sense of θεος, by the omission of the article, or he would not have omitted it before the second θεος, while he placed it, so significantly, before the first and the third.

To this mass of evidence must be added the fact, that the subject of the Proem, (i.e.) the doctrine of the logos, was rejected as spurious by the early Christian Unitarians in the 3rd century, as having been interpolated by the Platonizing or Gnostic Christians into St. John's Gospel; for which see the writers quoted in Priestley's Corruptions of Christianity and Early Opinions.

Here, then, is a strong mass of evidence in support of the hypothesis in question,—(i.e.) the authority of the ancient Jewish rabbins; that of Philostorgius, Nicephorus; the Eleucidarium of St. Augustin, or Austin, Archbishop of Canterbury; then the peculiar rythmetical character of the Proem itself, shewing it to be, from its construction, unlike the rest of St. John's Gospel; besides the testimony of Origen, that θεος, without the article, means not God absolutely, but God-like, which is strongly supported by the passages in John x. before quoted, and by the well-attested fact that the subject of the Proem was rejected as spurious by the Unitarians of the 3rd century; all uniting to form a body of evidence seldom producible in elucidating anything so ancient and obscure as the Proem of St. John's Gospel.

Θεος (without the article) and its Hebrew original ALEI, being thus proved to be, not God, but God-like or divine, it suited the purpose of the compiler or interpolater of the Proem to adopt it as a means of glorifying his own idea of Jesus, by applying to him the term λογος, in order to identify him with the λογος or demi-god of Plato, to whose system Christianity was then rapidly in the process of being conformed, through the agency of Philo and Justin Martyr and others of that school.

Hence the *λογος* was made flesh in the person of Jesus in the 14th verse, probably in imitation of the personification of Wisdom (Hebrew E-KME) in the 8th chapter of Proverbs. And if that Hebrew word were found rendered in the Septuagint by the word *λογος*, all difficulty would cease, as all Christians would unite in applying that attribute to Jesus Christ, who is so frequently declared in the New Testament to be the wisdom of God. But in expressing the divine character of the *λογος* by the word *θεος*, without the article, and as the equivalent of the Hebrew ALEI, the compiler or writer of the Proem could have had no more intention of making his *λογος* equal to the Almighty God, than Plato himself intended to do so, which he certainly did not, *his λογος* being professedly an inferior or demi-god.

G. PULLEYN HINTON.

Kingsdown, Bristol.

REVISED TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES.*

SINCE the introduction into the House of Commons of the question of revising our Authorized Bible, and its respectful though unsuccessful discussion there, it has become unnecessary (except in Dr. Cumming's presence) to deprecate the charge of heresy in urging the necessity of such a revision. The question can be discussed quietly and rationally by tolerably well-informed men of all theologies. And the propriety of such a revision is more and more generally acknowledged, especially as there is a growing understanding that *revision*, and not *re-translation*, is the improvement to be desired. But a *revision by authority* seems still hopeless; and those who desire to see the work done must do it, not beg the Crown and Parliament to get it done for them.

While scholars of all denominations among us, Catholic and Protestant, Established Church and Dissenting, have from time to time contributed new or corrected translations of various parts of the Scriptures (those of learned Episcopalians being the most numerous, as it was just to expect), no denomination has so earnestly welcomed and so highly appreciated these labours, or, in proportion to its extent, contributed so much towards their completion, as the Unitarians. The shelves of our ministers and thoughtful laymen of the older stamp generally contain Geddes, Lowth, Blayney, Newcome, Wintle, Scott and Holden's versions of various parts of the Old Testament, and Newcome's and others of the New; proudly ranging by their side our own Wellbeloved,

* The Holy Scriptures of the Old Covenant, in a Revised Translation. By the late Rev. Charles Wellbeloved, the Rev. George Vance Smith, B.A., the Rev. John Scott Porter. Vol. I., containing the Five Books of Moses, with the Books of Joshua, Judges and Ruth, by the late Rev. Charles Wellbeloved. Longman and Co. 1859.

Noyes, Wakefield, Belsham, and the too much disparaged "Improved Version" of the New Testament. The pure love of critical scriptural knowledge has been thus manifested, rather than mere zeal for their own doctrinal theology; for though the latter is notoriously concerned with the correction of a few remarkable false readings and mistranslations in the Common Version, this is but a small part of the larger necessity which every scholar feels of finding a clear and intelligible sense for verse after verse, and sometimes almost page after page, that are hopelessly disguised to the thoughtful reader of the English Bible.

We have just mentioned the *Improved Version* of the New Testament. It may be well here to recall the origin of that work and the principles on which it was conducted, as the present work is historically the continuation (we do not consider it to be the completion) of that undertaking. The history of the Improved Version is well known to many of our readers, but is now so old as to be new to the younger generation, at any rate.

The "Unitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge and the Practice of Virtue by the Distribution of Books" was formed in London in 1791, and from its origin contemplated the re-translation of the Scriptures, or the revision and improvement of the Authorized Version. The New Testament naturally attracted their first attention, and they were desirous of adopting Gilbert Wakefield's able and powerful new Translation, which first appeared in 1791. But a second edition of that work having just been published (1795), the bookseller's rights in which were found to preclude such an arrangement, though Mr. Wakefield had "most readily expressed his assent," the Society were obliged to postpone their scheme. It was resumed, however, by the West of England Society, and again prostrated by the sudden death of Mr. Kenrick, of Exeter, in 1804. In 1806, the London Society took it up again, and appointed a Committee for carrying it into effect. The Committee decided that it was "on many accounts more eligible to adopt as the basis of their work a known and approved translation already existing, than to make a new and original version." We think they chose the wise alternative, though it could not secure them from censure or misrepresentation. The idea of taking the Common Version as the basis and altering it just so far as necessary, does not seem to have occurred to them as desirable. Mr. Wakefield's Translation being still unattainable, they adopted Archbishop Newcome's, which had been published in 1796; and they laid it down as a principle "that no alteration should be made in the Primate's translation but where it appeared to be necessary to the correction of error or inaccuracy in the text, the language, the construction or the sense." And wherever they varied from Newcome, they scrupulously placed his translation at the bottom of the page. They could not foresee that they would be condemned alike when they followed Newcome, for varying from the Common Version, and

when they varied from him, for having his name (as their basis) on their title-page. Their work was, however, a good work,—learned, intelligent and truth-loving; and did more to popularize and diffuse a competent knowledge of New Testament criticism than perhaps any book before or since. The Introduction, containing a history of the canon and an account of the manuscripts, versions and editions of the Greek Testament, and describing the leading principles of textual criticism, is masterly for condensation and clearness. The notes are adapted to meet the very difficulties which are most sure to occur to thoughtful readers; and their explanations, when not merely critical, of course reflect the editors' theological views. How they could have been honestly made to reflect any others, has not been explained by the calumniators of the Improved Version. That it fully justified its not immodest title, we think it our duty here to maintain. That (according to our present estimate of the need of revision rather than re-translation) the improvement would have been greater if the alterations had been fewer, reflects upon the taste of the Archbishop rather than of his improvers, who were restrained by what they thought justice to him from reverting to the common translation where they would have preferred it as matter of taste simply. In this connection we may also observe that we cannot regret the non-adoption of Mr. Wakefield's version. We appreciate that version most highly. It is the work of accomplished classical scholarship. It is delightful to read some of the more difficult and obscure passages, of St. Paul's Epistles especially, as brought out in the strong racy English of Gilbert Wakefield's pen. A freshness and power is thus given to them, which we have perhaps long felt the want of in the Common Version. But the mere English reader feels astonished to think that the same Greek can be so differently put into English; and the biblical scholar considers it in many cases a too free translation, and in some cases a doubtful one, especially where Hebraic rather than classical Greek is in question. Had this version been adopted by the London Society, they would have been chargeable with much wider and more needless departures from the Common Version than in following Archbishop Newcome as they have done.

The present *Revised Translation* of the "Holy Scriptures of the Old Covenant," is made in furtherance of the same attempt so long since begun; being undertaken at the cost of the Unitarian Association, in which the old Society of 1791 has been many years merged. For several years past the production of an improved or revised translation of the Jewish Scriptures has engaged the earnest attention of the Association at its general meetings and of its Committee in the interim. For a while, the idea found favour of simply reprinting existing translations of the various books, as that of Geddes for the histories (or Well-beloved's for the Pentateuch), and Lowth's, Newcome's, Blayney's, Wintle's, Noyce's, Wellbeloved's or others for the various

poetical books. Such a work would have been useful and highly interesting, as combining the labours of all classes of theologians for the improvement of the English Bible, and cheapening many very costly works. It had also the recommendation of being easily done, as any editor of competent acquaintance with scriptural subjects could have superintended such a reprint. Its composite character would have had the evil of occasional inconsistencies, with the good of manifest freedom and catholicity. But we are truly glad to think that the Committee have seen their way to a more complete and uniform result, by engaging the services of thoroughly competent men among ourselves, whose revision will exhibit the present advanced state of biblical criticism, and whose careful adherence to the rule of *revision*, as distinguished from re-translation, will consult our loving veneration for the accustomed phraseology wherever truth or clearness is not sacrificed by its retention. This general love of the phraseology of the Common Version is not a thing to be trifled with; though there is an ignorant word-worshiping which still requires to be laboriously taught that neither Moses nor Christ spoke in English, and that King James's translators were not miraculously inspired for their work. But the work which they performed (following pretty close in the footsteps of previous translators) was the means of fixing a standard of "English pure and undefiled," which is as much to be respected in a literary as in a devotional point of view. We know no stronger existing preservative of the purity of the English tongue at this present day against the needless, ignorant, wilful or affected encroachments of Gallicisms, Americanisms and slang, than the constant reading of such English as King James's translators wrote. We rejoice, therefore, to find that the Common Version is made the basis of the present work. Even those parts which the late Mr. Wellbeloved had already published, and in which he had scarcely been thought chargeable with needless innovation, have been reduced in the final revision (which was almost his latest labour) to a still nearer conformity with the Common Version. The volume now published is intirely from his pen, comprising the Pentateuch (before published), and Joshua, Judges and Ruth (now first produced). We are also to have the miscellaneous poetical books, already published in his Bible, and the minor prophets, which it was understood some time since that he had prepared for the press. Though not expressed in the title-page, there is no doubt of the fact that the work of posthumous revision is fulfilled by the Rev. J. Kenrick, in pious reverence for the memory of his learned and venerable father-in-law. Thus the larger part of the Old Testament writings will be under the guarantee of Mr. Wellbeloved's most trustworthy name, the later historical books and the larger prophets being left to be supplied by other hands. And when the names of the Rev. G.

Vance Smith, one of Mr. Wellbeloved's successors in the Manchester College Chair of Biblical learning, and of the Rev. J. Scott Porter, who holds the corresponding office in the Belfast Institution, are mentioned as pledged for the remaining books, no fear can be entertained for the result. The diversity of pens will not even result in perceptible diversity of style, if these gentlemen adhere (as no doubt they will) to the simple plan of revision rather than re-translation. On the principle of keeping the common rendering except when change is required either for correctness, for sense, for clearness or for manifest reasons of taste (in fact, of using the Common Version as the editors of the Improved Version used Newcome's), it is to be hoped that no more diversity of style will be traceable in the combined work of these three gentlemen, than in that of King James's six sets of translators, who took as their basis the Bishops' Bible and never altered it except for a reason.

The few remarks we have now to make on the execution of the first volume, just out, will not be directed to particular points of criticism. We have not noticed (nor could we expect to notice) anything of importance, critically, that is new to the readers of Mr. Wellbeloved's Bible. But the greater approach to the Common Version we regard as a well-founded tribute to the praise of the latter. The altered form of the book is also a great addition to the pleasure of reading it. Even the Mosaic laws are easy reading by its aid. We have a well-printed octavo page, not in double columns, nor broken into verses, but in paragraphs like other books, with the chapters noted at the top of the page and the verses marked unobtrusively at the side for the sake of mere reference. The sacred name Jehovah is, as in Mr. Wellbeloved's Bible, reinstated for the LORD, in small capitals, by which curious contrivance our old translators had stereotyped the superstition of the Jews, who do not pronounce the sacred name, and had carried their own apparently still further by not even writing it. The signification of other names, when mentioned as significant, is also introduced in brackets, thus: "Eve bare Cain [ACQUISITION], for she said, 'I have acquired a man from Jehovah.'" In the Common Version all this is lost, except in the large copies, where the reader may find it, if he seeks it, in the marginal notes. The very artificial use of italics in the Common Version is wisely discarded here, when designed to represent (as it so often is) a mere diversity of idiom, which cannot after all be uniformly shewn by that or any other means. Of course the poetical parts are printed as poetry and not purposely made prose. There are no notes whatever in this volume; but it is intimated in the Preface that "should the undertaking be favourably received, a volume of brief notes might be added, in which the reasons of the changes introduced into the revision should be stated, and difficult passages be explained." We trust such

a volume of notes will follow when we have got the other two volumes of translation.

It is due to the printers of this handsome and wonderfully cheap volume (Messrs. Woodfall and Kinder) to say, that the Queen's printers can have no case for a monopoly against them. Messrs. Spottiswood might perhaps point with well-affected zest to the very few slight *errata* which we have detected; but when our editors come to stereotyping their revision, they will, no doubt, revise these just as strictly as a Queen's printer could. We have, indeed, noticed only four, and they are too obvious to be important: *Je ovah* (p. 95), *oe* for *he* (210), *t* for *to* (258), and *bpt* for *but* (438). We presume "a wood, which he cast into the waters" (113), is a mere erratum for "wood," where Mr. Wellbeloved's Bible has "a tree." We must suggest, too, that (when we come to stereotyping) the plan of explaining a significant name by brackets should be extended to Exodus iii. 14: "Say to the children of Israel, [JEHOVAH] I WILL BE, hath sent me;" and to Exodus xvi. 15, "They said one to another, [MANNA] What is it?" And while we are in the critical vein (to shew also that we have really read the book which we so highly commend) we may also mention "cheweth the cud" (for *chew*) in Lev. xi. 26, a mistake uncorrected from Mr. Wellbeloved's version, and arising from the change of "every beast" into "all beasts;" and we may express surprise at the restoration of "a thousand" (in Numb. xxxv. 4), which Mr. Wellbeloved's Bible had corrected into "two thousand" on the authority of the Septuagint and the evident demand of the context. But we emphatically record, on careful perusal, that the book is a model of typographical correctness as well as beauty of page; and that the presentation of the books of Moses—not to mention the subsequent histories and the charming episode of Ruth—in this greatly improved aspect ought to be a new inducement to Bible-reading. If we feel this to be the case with the first volume, a large part of which consists of the least interesting books of the Old Testament, how much more will it be so with the other volumes!

A practical question suggests itself as to the proper use to be made of this new translation by our body, individually or collectively. Its value for personal, and equally so for family, use is too obvious to need insisting upon. But will it be desirable to use it also in our pulpits? Of course, in our free community, there will be, on this as on most other subjects, diversity of opinion and action. But we neither desire nor anticipate that this revision should supersede the Common Version in our churches, any more than we have desired or experienced such a use of the Improved Version of the New Testament. Most of our ministers freely use their individual liberty, in reading the Scriptures in public worship, to explain difficulties and, occasionally at least, to amend erroneous readings or translations. The practice

is not unfrequent among them of reading continuously some particular book from Sunday to Sunday out of a more correct and expressive translation than King James's. In this way Mr. Well-beloved's or Noyes's Psalms, Job and some of the Prophets, have been very usefully made known to our congregations, the hearers in many instances comparing what they hear read with the expressions of the Common Version in their hands. We should recommend a similar partial and occasional, but not constant, use of the Revised Translation now presented. To our smaller congregations and poorer ministers a pulpit copy for this purpose will be very valuable. But the very freedom of our body will for ever prevent this publication from being recognized as, in any authoritative sense, the Unitarian version (any more than the Improved New Testament has been); while, we trust, that same freedom will most heartily bid it welcome.

We have not yet called attention to the very proper though very strange-looking alteration of the accustomed title, "Old Testament" into "*Old Covenant*." This is quite right; for the book contains the scriptures of a Covenant, not the scriptures of a Testament. What an odd jumble of ideas has been perpetuated all these centuries by this mistranslation! How easily explainable, but how stupid to have ever made it! Because in Greek there is only one word for two kinds of agreement so distinct and different as a covenant and a "*dying will or testament*," whereas in English we have a word for each purpose, the Greek *διαθήκη* has been translated by the wrong one, and the beautiful figure by which the Almighty is spoken of as ratifying His covenants first with the Jewish people and then with mankind at large, has been perverted into the profane absurdity of our speaking of His *Testaments*! Strange that such folly (closely bordering upon blasphemy if literally pressed) should ever have gained ground! But how inveterate is habit! How affected it will seem at first to talk of the Bible as made up of the scriptures of the Old and New *Covenants*! We have ourselves conformed to the wrong and absurd phraseology, while noticing this very book, whose title rebukes us for doing so. Not that we have done it quite unconsciously in this instance (though we often may); but that we are satisfied on this occasion with recognizing the brave right-mindedness of the present translators in *revising* the title-page, and thus preparing the way for a new habit of speech among us; the use of which in this occasional paper might have seemed an affectation on the part of the reviewer. But we mean to call a Covenant a Covenant, and a Testament a Testament, among the intelligent, henceforth. (Geddes, by the by, has Covenant on his title-page.) It is a just tribute to the superior copiousness of the English language, in this instance, over that of the Greek itself, usually more copious, which an Englishman should insist upon as due to patriotism no less than theology.

REV. J. H. HUTTON'S RESIGNATION OF THE PULPIT AT UPPER
BROOK STREET, MANCHESTER.

WE place before our readers a very remarkable correspondence which has lately been going on, and which has led to the retirement from the Unitarian ministry of Rev. J. H. Hutton, B.A. This gentleman has occupied a conspicuous place in our body as minister at Norwich and Manchester, succeeding at the latter place Rev. J. J. Tayler, and having previously supplied the pulpit of Rev. Jas. Martineau at Paradise Street during his year's absence in Germany. Mr. Hutton has also latterly discharged for a short time the duties of one of the Professors at the Unitarian Home Missionary Board at Manchester. Bearing as we do a cheerful testimony to the abilities, the candour, the high personal character and the habitual piety of Mr. Hutton, and feeling also no small interest in him as the son of Dr. Hutton, one of the fathers of our Israel (a man honoured by all who know him), we cannot but regret Mr. Hutton's estrangement from the simple and scriptural doctrine of Unitarianism on the subject of the person of Christ. The candour and the high sense of honour which have influenced Mr. Hutton, and led him to resign a respectable and not un lucrative post, will win the commendation of those who least sympathize with his new opinions. We feel no desire at present to dwell on the theological inconsistencies which appear in his statements; but we commend his integrity in resigning a pulpit to which he had been invited as a Unitarian minister, and we shall not blame his congregation, however attached to him they may be, if they accept his resignation. With no disposition to exaggerate theological differences or to limit the freedom of our ministers and congregations, we must regard the deliberate adoption of the doctrine of the "eternal personality of Jesus Christ" as a disqualification of one whose duty it is to lead the devotions of a society of Unitarian Christians. Eternity is one of the incommunicable attributes of God. We cannot see how the admission of Christ's eternity is to be separated from the worship of Christ as God. To this practical conclusion Mr. Hutton does not appear to have yet attained, but he is probably not far from it. We have only in addition to observe, that to whatever section of the Christian church he may ultimately belong, we are sure he will carry with him the respect and good wishes of all his Unitarian friends.

No. I.

To the Members of the Congregation assembling in the Upper Brook-Street Chapel.

Quarndon, near Derby, August 5, 1859.

MY DEAR FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CHRISTIANS,—With no small concern and anxiety do I feel myself at length compelled to address you, in order that I may frankly avow to you my somewhat anomalous condition of faith.

Your valued friendship and long-continued kindness and regard imperatively demand of me that I should at once inform you of a change of conviction that is the result of upwards of three years' reading, meditation and active experience. I came to you as a Unitarian minister, but pledged to no specific doctrines. Nothing, however, would be further from my intention or desire, than to use my liberty as a cloak of selfishness, and forget *your* wishes and feelings, while availing myself of the large scope which that liberty gives *me* for free thought and expression. There is a limit beyond which perhaps no minister can wisely exercise his public functions, as the expounder of truth and duty to a congregation, under peculiar and perhaps even *isolated* specialties of thought and faith; and I should be *most unwilling* to prolong my services amongst you, if my mind should have passed too far beyond the boundary of our common conviction, to render me any longer useful to you, in your own judgment at least; and rather perhaps a burden than an aid to you in the unfolding of your religious life.

I have to avow myself a believer in the eternal personality of Jesus Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, a Spiritual Being, truly described as *taking upon Him* this human life and lot, and so revealing himself to men as "the Word made flesh." The more I read the Scriptures and ponder the mysterious realities and relations of our nature, the more strongly am I convinced that, in missing what appears to me deep and kindling truth, we lose unspeakably rich and fruitful elements of religious life, for the sake of a theology which I cannot but regard (the more I contemplate it) as too nearly allied to a cold and ineffectual Judaic Monotheism. Christianity, it seems to me, must be either *more or less* than that which commonly bears the name of Unitarianism. If the Scriptures are utterly unreliable, and supernaturalism simply a mythical dream, then Christianity is no Revelation properly so called (is not to be distinguished, I mean, in kind, from the revelations of every day and every age), but is merely an interesting page in the history of religious reform. But if, as I cannot but deeply believe, the whole course of the Jewish history, as found in the Old and New Testament writings, was but the gradual unfolding of a distinct, special and Divine Revelation, supernaturally affirmed, we shall then, I think, more fully and truly understand and feel its worth and importance, when we recognize, in its consummation, what St. John and St. Paul *distinctly* (as I conceive), and others of the Evangelical writers more or less decidedly, set forth, viz., the revelation of God's will and character, by the Incarnation and earthly sojourn of the ever-living Son of His love; of One who, "for us men and for our sakes," quitted the blessed fellowship of the Father, that He might possess men more deeply and consciously with His spirit, that He might win them to a life of loftier and more permanent holiness, and reconcile them to God by His influence and by His revelation to the world of the Father's goodness and love; one of the most conspicuous purposes of this revelation being, to shew that self-sacrifice (the highest human virtue) is not only human, but divine.

I need not, perhaps, go more at length here into the doctrinal points of my theology. I will only add that this form of faith has taken a firm hold of me, quite as much from my conviction of its suitableness to, and power over, the natural human heart, as from my desire to dis-

cover the true meaning and general bearings of scripture. Most harmoniously, as it appears to me, have reason, experience and scripture led me to the same conclusion.

I cannot for a moment lose sight of the *subordinate* character of the *Son of God* as a derived being; while at the same time I cannot help regarding Him as the *direct* source and spring of all human virtue, which is fragmentary in us, full and mighty in Him,—the Father being still the *ultimate* origin of all spiritual life.

As I explained in a sermon lately preached before the Provincial Assembly, and since in Upper Brook-Street chapel (on July 17th), I hold many principles or convictions common among us still as intact as ever. My faith is no less strong than heretofore in the *moral* Unity of God; and I must ever maintain the perfect harmony and union, or oneness of spirit and purpose, of the Father and the Son. I am not a Trinitarian. I do *not* believe in the personality of the Holy Spirit. I am no believer in the popular theory of the Atonement. I believe that Christ came to reconcile man to God, not God to man; and that *not* by any divine life apart from us, and offered in our stead, do we obtain salvation or acceptance with an all-loving God, but work it out by our appropriation of that divine life which was "*the life indeed*," and which has a voice in every human heart, or, in other words, to which every heart has access.

My views with regard to the authority of scripture, too, have undergone no change. I think that its accuracy cannot be infallibly relied on; that every man must use his best knowledge, judgment and reflection, to decide how far it is reliable, and what facts and convictions it most clearly yields to his own mind.

I do not abate, in the least degree, my strong attachment to the most perfect liberty and toleration; and should I fail to retain my present position as your minister (and assuredly I will only retain it, my friends, on the clear understanding that I do so, at your desire, in conformity with your united wishes as a congregation), I shall quit the ministry altogether for another occupation, as nowhere else, I have good reason to believe, should I find a larger amount of religious sympathy, and be so free from shackles of every kind. And let me say, my dear friends, that I never felt myself more anxious to appreciate and respect all honest differences of opinion, or more ready to give them my fullest possible sympathy, than I do now, when believing, in the expressive and truly significant language of St. Paul, that "we are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

I have only to add that I shall anxiously await your reply, since, as I have hinted, not merely my relation to you must depend upon it, but, what I value even more, my relation to the Christian ministry itself. I hope it may not be necessary for me to quit this chosen field of labour. I desire nothing better than to live and die in the Christian ministry, and even in your service, if it were entirely agreeable to you, and not detrimental to your highest interests. But I must beg of you to act quite independently of any feeling or wish of mine, as I am sure it will not be for the ultimate happiness of either party, if our bond of union is allowed to continue, in despite of some feeling of repugnance on your part or contrary to your better judgment. It is a serious thing rending the tie of minister and people, where there is a mutual attachment, such

as (I may perhaps venture to say) has hitherto bound us together; but it were better to break the bond at once, than retain the connection without the feeling that should belong to it. Hoping you will pardon this necessarily long letter, believe me to be, my dear Friends and Fellow-christians, your faithfully attached Friend and Pastor,

J. H. HUTTON.

No. II.

Manchester, Aug. 16, 1859.

Annexed are copies of two letters, written at the request of members of the Committee, to the Rev. J. H. Hutton, and of the communications received from him in reply, the whole of which I am directed by the Committee to place in the hands of the pewholders and seatholders of the congregation.

R. D. DARBISHIRE, Secretary.

No. III.

To Rev. J. H. Hutton.

Manchester, Aug. 12, 1859.

MY DEAR SIR,—In the course of conversation on the subject of your letter to the congregation, it has been agreed amongst some members of the Committee, that with a view to enabling the congregation more readily to come to a conclusion upon the question you have submitted, you should be requested to inform me, in such terms as I may lay before any meeting, of the effect which you conceive your change of conviction is likely to have upon your ministration amongst us, supposing it to be continued. How far will your present views permit of that simplicity of religious worship to which we have been accustomed, and are generally attached? How far shall you feel bound to enforce, in your discourses, or in instruction to the young, the particular tenet, your final adoption of which seems to have given occasion to your communication?

Believe me, yours very faithfully,

R. D. DARBISHIRE.

No. IV.

To R. D. Darbshire, Esq.

Quarndon, near Derby, Aug. 13, 1859.

MY DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of this morning, I wish to assure you, and the congregation through you, that I have no desire whatever to interfere with the simplicity of our present form or forms of worship. In the terms of your trust-deed, I only seek with you to “worship God, *through His Son Jesus Christ*.”

In regard to my instruction of the young, i. e. of such as I have had hitherto,—quite children for the most part,—my instructions will be precisely what they have been. I have always made it my object to give them facts of history, or illustrative exposition for the understanding of scripture terms, and Hebrew customs, antiquities, geography, &c., with such simple allusions to the leading lessons of the New Testament, drawn from the Gospels, as are fitted for influencing the conduct of children.

I have always thought doctrine quite unsuited and unseasonable to the young; and whatever my views were, should never wish to do so much violence to the indefinite conceptions of youth, as to endeavour to impress upon their minds any tenets of doctrinal theology; further of course

than are implied, or implicitly conveyed, in plain moral lessons, bearing constant reference to our Heavenly Father, the great Ruler and Sustainer of the universe.

In regard of course to an older class of pupils, from fifteen or sixteen and upwards, desiring perhaps to be prepared for attending the Communion Service of the Lord's Supper, my course would naturally be different; I could not pretend to prepare for such a service, without freely expressing my full convictions upon the nature and office of Christ, and His relation to the Father and to mankind. But let me very distinctly say, that still here, as heretofore, I should be anxious, simply, to unfold, what appear to me, the power and value and truth of my own convictions; not for one moment to force those convictions on another. I should invite the freest inquiry and conversation, and be in every way better satisfied to awaken personal faith and original thought and conviction, than to produce a mere copy of my own opinions and faith.

With regard to my discourses, should I be so fortunate as to continue your minister, I should *certainly hold myself free* to preach whatever I might feel true and important, *without restriction of any kind*. At the same time you will bear me out, my dear Sir, I think, and the congregation generally will also, when I say that my mind does not dwell naturally much on doctrine, and I may venture to say it is never likely to do so. It is subjects of practical and devotional interest that have almost always occupied my thoughts hitherto; and as far as I can judge, this will be as true for the future as of the past. It will be more by inference and occasional explanations of theological points that have a distinct moral and religious bearing, than by anything else, that you will perceive,—should I be permitted to retain my place as the minister of Upper Brook Street,—that my theology is not what it was when I first came to settle in Manchester. Assuring you, my dear Sir, that this is a frank expression of my own thoughts in answer to your inquiries, and written with no other desire than to declare the truth, as I am most anxious that the congregation should give an unbiassed judgment from *their own point of view alone*, without reference to myself, I remain, my dear Sir, very truly and respectfully yours,

J. H. HUTTON.

No. V.

To Rev. J. H. Hutton.

Manchester, August 14, 1859.

MY DEAR SIR,—At a meeting of members of the Committee and several other members of the congregation, held to-day, for further conversation on the subject of your letter, I was desired, as Secretary, to forward to you the following extracts from it, and to request that you will have the kindness to give some further explanation of your view, and of the mode in which you are disposed to harmonize the statements respecting the character of Christ contained in those passages. These are:

First (from the third paragraph): "I have to avow myself a believer in the eternal personality of Jesus Christ, as the only begotten Son of God, a Spiritual Being, truly described as *taking upon Him* this human life and lot, and so revealing himself to men, as 'the Word made flesh.'"

Second (the sixth paragraph): "I cannot for a moment lose sight of the *subordinate* character of the *Son of God*, as a derived being; while

at the same time I cannot help regarding Him as the *direct* source and spring of all human virtue, which is fragmentary in us, full and mighty in Him,—the Father being still the *ultimate* origin of all spiritual life.”

I am, my dear Sir, yours very faithfully,

R. D. DARBISHIRE.

P.S. I should be glad to have your reply as soon as may suit your convenience, in order that I may be able to communicate it to the congregation without loss of time.

No. VI.

Quarndon, near Derby, Aug. 15, 1859.

MY DEAR SIR,—Oblige me by expressing to the Committee for me, that I felt some scruple in further entering upon a definite exposition of my doctrinal convictions; it seemed to me to be narrowing the ground of freedom on which alone I choose to stand. Say that I am ready, personally and privately, to explain to any friend who desires further explanation what I meant by the expressions extracted from my letter; but I do not incline to say more on the subject officially to the Committee, considering, as I do, that my declaration of belief was quite ample enough to furnish ground for a decision for or against me, as the minister of Upper Brook Street. Besides this, further explanation is now rendered unnecessary by my resignation.

I am, dear Sir, always very sincerely yours,

J. H. HUTTON.

No. VII.

To the Members of the Congregation assembling in Upper Brook-Street Chapel, Manchester.

Quarndon, near Derby, Aug. 15, 1859.

MY DEAR FRIENDS AND FELLOW-CHRISTIANS,—Having been informed that there are “*several* respected members” of your congregation who, being now made acquainted with my change of conviction, desire that I should no longer continue my ministrations among you, I herewith tender my resignation of the Upper Brook-Street chapel pulpit. I do so with the deepest pain and regret, because I have become strongly attached to you socially and individually,—and have often indulged the hope that nothing would ever compel *me* or *you* to sunder the sacred tie that has thus far united us in mutual esteem and love. But rather than introduce any schism in your society, I think it wiser at once to retire. I resign my office and work amongst you with unfeigned regard and esteem for you all, and with a strong personal affection for very many amongst you. I trust your highest interests may be more effectually cared for by some earnest man, whose doctrinal convictions may more entirely harmonize with your own; and be assured that you will ever have my most fervent prayers for your continued life and progress as a religious community.

Most grateful am I for that happiness, peace and liberty which I have ever received and enjoyed in the midst of you, and which, I am only too well aware, it has been always difficult for me adequately to acknowledge, and impossible to requite.

I trust the day may be not far distant when it will be seen and felt that differences of doctrinal conviction do not constitute a sufficient

ground for separation between those who can worship together. But meanwhile allow me to lay down my office, and believe me ever to remain, amidst all vicissitudes, your faithfully attached and grateful Friend,

JOSEPH HENRY HUTTON.

It will, after reading this correspondence, interest our readers (even though it may not throw much light upon the subject of Mr. Hutton's new opinions) to peruse some extracts from the sermon to which he makes reference in his first letter, and which he entitles, "Essential Convictions and Non-essential Opinions." Of that sermon our readers will find at pp. 498, 499, of our last No., a faithful summary.

Among essential convictions, Mr. Hutton places in the foremost rank

"— that primary one of our religious life, that all things spring from, and rest in, One ever-living Source, the Origin and Centre of all things, the Fountain of all existence. The deeper is our study of science and history, the fuller is our experience and knowledge of the world about us,—the higher our meditations rise into the unseen world,—the more are we persuaded of the truth to which all sciences alike are continually pointing, that the world has *One* maker, and is harmonious in all its parts, revealing a unity of thought and plan, that was not compatible with the old polytheistic theories, and never could have been characteristic of the government of divided minds. Nay more, I think the deepest insight into our own natures, and the profoundest knowledge of other men, is fitted strongly to assure us that the moral government of mankind is, and ever has been, perfectly harmonious and consistent in its character; and that, whatever we may concede to the orthodox churches, as to a combination of persons in the Godhead, we can never be persuaded to believe in a division of moral attributes, and an ekeing out, by one nature, of those elements of hope and salvation, which man must in vain have looked for from another. A moral division in the spiritual world, our minds find it as impossible and unhealthful to believe in, as in any severance in our own souls, as in the notion of separate dispositions acting independently of one another, without let or hindrance, or modification, from other and opposite dispositions, equally conspicuous in, and characteristic of, the entire man."—Pp. 6, 7.

Another essential truth Mr. Hutton finds in our knowledge of holiness:

"Being created by the hand of God, *our* moral notions are *His* notions, so far as they are moral at all; they reflect the thought of His mind and the purpose of His will, or we are mere dreamers in a world of dreams, reflections of an empty shadow! Accordingly, what is just or unjust with us, we cannot be persuaded is otherwise with God; we feel as if it were something like blasphemy to say, that, for any purpose under Heaven, God could do, what would be confessedly iniquitous in man,—*e. g.* punish the guiltless for the guilty."—P. 7.

Another essential truth Mr. Hutton finds in man's free will.

Another essential conviction of human nature is, "that man

is saved by the divine life in him." Again, Mr. Hutton finds one of the absolute verities of God in the conviction,

"— that men can only attain to the perception and understanding of His thought by perfect openness of mind and perfect mental freedom: not only by keeping clear of all positive creed-making, and crystallizing thought and doctrine into system; but by keeping clear also of all virtual creed-making or dogmatism of mind, of all union for narrow ends, for the spread, not of essential truth alone, such as I have described it, —the truth that lays hold of character, and arises in, and acts upon, the living soul, which we may or must agree to spread and urge upon the world,—but for the propagation of mere logical or probable conclusions, that are accepted simply as such, not for any vital influence that they exercise over the human heart and life, but because they have been educed from analogy, or from a process of reasoning, or from the systematizing of a theology."—Pp. 9, 10.

It was in these words that Mr. Hutton addressed his Presbyterian and Unitarian fellow-worshippers at Chester:

"We often boast of our freedom, my brethren, and may we long retain it, as at this day,—for it is a most precious inheritance from those Presbyterian fathers, in one of whose pulpits I now stand, truly proud of my own descent from Philip Henry; but, I confess it seems to me, that our freedom or liberality is of too passive a kind, if it only keeps us waiting (albeit with open doors and no subscription) for the dissatisfied of other churches to come in, casually, as they may see light. 'Truly so, (it is rejoined) that *is* passive; therefore, let us at once set on foot a doctrinal crusade,—let us preach our Unitarianism far and wide, north and south, east and west, and men will join us, and come in with gladness, to be counted in our fold.' Good, my brethren, if by your Unitarianism you mean all those deep religious truths that fill and inspire your souls, and only these:—good, so far as you are sure that what you preach is more than a mere conclusion of your intellect and reason, seeking to harmonize and complete your creed:—good, so far as you have devoutly inquired (with patient, earnest and humble mind) if there be not any living and stirring element of essential truth abroad, that, as yet, you are shutting out from your Unitarian teaching and creed; spiritual truth, which you might yet make your own, to give you fuller power over men, and deeper insight into the mind and thought of God, were you not too strongly bent upon seeking logical or analogical agreement and system, and not sufficiently just and open-hearted towards the sects around, not sufficiently disposed to believe that they also are teaching and proclaiming some everlasting truth of Heaven."—Pp. 15, 16.

POSTSCRIPT.—Since writing the above, we have received from a trustworthy source an account of the proceedings of the Brook-Street congregation, convened to take into consideration the communications of their pastor. The congregation in the first instance passed unanimously a resolution of thanks to Mr. Hutton for the frank and spontaneous communication of his change of theological opinion. Subsequently, after a long, temperate and deliberative discussion, a majority (sufficiently large to meet the

requirements of the trust-deed) of qualified voters adopted a resolution to the effect that the congregation, having read and attentively considered the recent communications of Mr. Hutton, sorrowfully accept his resignation of the pulpit. The Secretary was requested, in conveying these resolutions to Mr. Hutton, to assure him that the congregation would long hold in affectionate and grateful remembrance his devoted services to the society. All who took part in this discussion manifested their warm appreciation of Mr. Hutton's personal character and influence, and the language of those who supported the second resolution evinced their anxiety to perform a painful duty kindly but firmly.

CHANNING.

DEAR SIR,

A young friend has given me the accompanying translation of a very interesting chapter in Baron Bunsen's recent work ("Gott in der Geschichte," *God revealed in History*) on Dr. Channing. I am not aware that any translation of it has yet appeared in England. If so, I think it may possibly interest some of your readers, as shewing the progress which true and liberal ideas of religion are making on the continent. I was astonished when I was at Kiel, in Holstein, two summers ago, to find how much Channing was read and admired both among the learned and the general public.

Bunsen's style is diffuse and not always very clear; but it seems to me that in this translation his meaning is faithfully and, I should think, intelligibly given. I have compared it word for word with the original, and in one or two places, as you will perceive, have slightly modified the rendering.

J. J. TAYLER.

Gale Cottage, Keswick, August 15, 1859.

CHANNING, a citizen of New England, born in 1780, and preacher to a Unitarian congregation in Boston from 1803 till his death in 1842, is the proclaimer to the United States of the great prophetic truth of the revelation of God in humanity. He entered life as the minister of a Unitarian congregation, and protested, like Locke and the great Newton, against the Athanasian construction of the biblical doctrine of Father, Son and Spirit, as unscriptural and at variance with reason. But he was far from substituting an Arian creed for the Ecclesiastical. According to his view, dogma in general is but an incomplete expression of biblical truth, and an unsatisfactory exposition of the revelation contained in the Scriptures. Christianity is a divine life and energy of soul in human society. Christian communion rests, according to him, on a living and active faith, which shews itself in brotherly love and in a life of self-sacrifice for humanity; and on the acknowledgment of God as a Father, which lies at the

root of all true brotherhood among men. This doctrine he found in the whole Bible, but principally in the writings of the New Testament, and especially in the Gospels. The Bible was to him the written word of divine revelation; not a doctrine, but rather the expression of a religious and moral consciousness. In the working out of this thought, we must not expect to find in Channing either deep metaphysical speculation, or any extraordinary acuteness of historical criticism applied to the books of the Bible. But a soundness of understanding that is hardly ever at fault, guided by the purest moral earnestness, quickened by a glowing love for the promotion of the Divine in his own country and among mankind at large, and animated by a self-sacrificing love for his neighbour, is united in him with a sober historical faith in God's word as revealed in the Bible. His great significance as an interpreter of the Bible lies, therefore, precisely in two points. The first is this: that while he clings fast and unconditionally to the principle of rational interpretation, he still finds in Scripture the essential and authoritative matter of religion, which the rationalistic Unitarians could only, as it were, casually and collaterally recognize, and altogether within the limits of the ordinary morality of life. The other point is, that the whole community of men with their rational conscience stand face to face with the Bible, as the judge before the law-book; but this community is, in his view, identical with humanity, arranged by law in families, nations and states.

As Channing was unwearied in setting forth these principles to his nation, through popular and fearless utterance in speaking and writing, we cannot too highly estimate the importance of his personal influence on all Christians speaking the English tongue. And so it is explained, how the same man, whom the older Unitarians in the United States and England looked upon with mistrust, and the Calvinists and Methodists abhorred, and whom the friends and supporters of slavery feared and hated, is now, at this day, some few years after his death, not less on account of his moderation and wisdom than for his classical eloquence, which recalls the most beautiful models of antiquity, honoured as a great Christian and spiritual character, and even as a prophet of the Christian consciousness of the future, in every part of his vast fatherland. Without doubt, he is destined to exercise an increasing influence on the spiritual conception and the earnest practical application of Christianity in the United States.*

* I have had before me the 13th edition of Channing's works (six vols. 8vo. Boston and New York, 1854.)—The reader will find a spirited delineation of the life of this great and good man in the "*Œuvres Sociales de Channing*," by M. Edouard Laboulaye, published in Paris in 1854, which was followed in 1855 by the work, "*De l'Esclavage*," and in 1857 by the first part of the "*Traité Religieux*." An accomplished English lady has given us an admirable portraiture of the man, in the French language, with a preface by Charles Remusat (Paris,

Channing is an ancient with a Christian heart; a man like a Greek, a citizen like a Roman, and a Christian like an apostle. Those mistake him who think of him as a learned and speculative theologian. If he had been so, he would have known how to reconcile the ideas of redemption and atonement, and he would have succeeded in apprehending and representing his Christ, as the Redeemer, in his divine and unapproachable elevation; a want not yet satisfied in the Unitarian congregations of England and the United States, and perhaps the reason of their weakness. Accordingly we must not expect, even from this prophet of the presence of God in humanity, any scientific solution of the problem; but that consciousness beams forth from him as he touches reality, not only through his incorruptible love of truth and his moral courage, but also in consequence of his dealing with truth as in the presence of God. To the ascendancy of this feeling belongs, above all, his conception of religion as a personal concern, and his placing at the foundation of all education the consciousness of the moral responsibility of the individual. His conviction of the necessity of a progressive reformation, breaking down the limits between the spiritual and temporal with a view to give increased effect to religion, and so strengthening its moral depth and earnestness, he expresses eloquently in his remarkable discourse on "Spiritual Freedom," preached in 1830. [*The author here gives an extract from its conclusion*].

For such a true, progressive and moral reformation, he demands at the outset of this sermon, freedom, civil and political freedom, but as the result of Christian and spiritual freedom. [*Another extract is here given; and after some further extracts from Channing's different works, the chapter thus concludes:*]

If such a man, whose life and conversation in view of all his fellow-citizens corresponded to the earnestness of his Christian words, and stands before them without a stain, is not a Christian prophet of the presence of God in humanity, I know of none. As a theologian, his fundamental prophetic thought is this,—that Christian communion has no other basis than the simple consciousness of Jesus and his gospel, and that the intellectual development of metaphysical points constitutes neither the sole nor the highest symbol of this communion. Much rather, according to him, is it the proper object of Christianity to hallow and purify all the relations of actual life; and all the arrangements of society and the church should be directed to this end as their divine aim, with equal reference to the individual and the community. Such, it seems to me, is Channing's significance in the history of the world.

1857). The German translation of Channing's works, in twelve small vols., by Schulze and Pastor Sydow, published at Berlin in 1851, has deservedly met with a favourable reception everywhere, and had a wide circulation.

CORRESPONDENCE.

REV. JAMES MARTINEAU ON THE LATE MANCHESTER NEW
COLLEGE EXAMINATION.

SIR,

STUDENTS' habits must have greatly changed since you and I were at college, if the answers read in the examination-room survive till the next morning. At all events, they never return into the Professor's hands; and he has no further claim upon them when their appointed purpose has been served. I have therefore neither the power nor the right to avail myself of your proposal to present extracts from them for the appreciation of your readers. I have referred, however, to my notes of the examination on the Evidences of Natural Religion, and they enable me to extend to the students the correction already given with regard to myself.

The examination paper contained *thirteen* groups of questions. The *fourth* of these, which alone can have elicited the answers obnoxious to your criticism, ran thus :

"Into what state does the Theistical problem fall, when '*Natural Forces*' and *Rational Thought* are allowed to compete for the genesis of the Universe? Account for the mutual jealousies of Science and Religion; and for the different effect of the argument from design on different predispositions. Assign to it its true place."

In reply to these questions *one* paper only was read. It gave a logical analysis of one particular form under which the Theistical controversy appears, viz. this: The disputants agree to reckon among real causes both *Physical Forces* and *Rational Volition*, and differ only on the question, *which* of the two is to be regarded as Primary, *which* Secondary. These conditions being assumed, the writer of the answer (1) traced the line of thought worked out by a Scientific reasoner, who starts from the postulate of Physical Force and pushes it as far as he can; (2) traced the inverse path of the Theist, who avails himself of the other postulate, and makes the most of it at every opening for Divine causation; (3) expounded why (i. e. through what fault in the premisses) it is so difficult for the minds of these two persons to meet, and each is apt to slip past the other, without bringing their difference to a determinate point.

The treatment of these matters in the paper was simply expository. The writer of it personated in succession his opposite *dramatis personæ*, but did not speak in his own character, except to shew, in a few sentences, how "the mutual jealousies of Science and Religion" may cease.

It is natural, perhaps, that, in an examination listened to by snatches, students should incur the repute of opinions not their own; just as, to most hearers in a church, the arguments of Job, and their refutation by his "friends," are all one.

But I affirm distinctly that the papers in the late Natural Theology examination, far from justifying your implied reflection on "the conclusions at which some of the students for our ministry have arrived," indicate throughout a hearty and thoughtful acceptance of the whole circle of truths which devout Christians have presupposed and devout Theists have believed in every age. Whether the *method* be or be not precisely that which you or I think best, is surely a small pedantic

matter: "No track goes wrong that ends in God." And I cannot but deprecate, on behalf of our candidates for the ministry, every ungenial surmise which, groundless in itself and published on insufficient plea, may injuriously re-act on the spirit of their work.

JAMES MARTINEAU.

Braemar, Aberdeenshire, August 13, 1859.

[Our readers may perhaps think that more than enough has been written on the subject of the late examination on the Evidences of Natural Religion; but we must correct Mr. Martineau's assumption that our expression of want of sympathy with the answers given on that occasion referred exclusively to one answer to a single group of questions. From many of the answers, so far as we comprehended them, we dissented. What painfully struck us was, that while the negative arguments were intelligible enough (we do not say *conclusive*), those on the other side of the question were obscure and apparently mystical. We cannot accept Mr. Martineau's *dramatic* theory as a true explanation of the case. Nor can we think him right in deprecating criticism. If he will refer to our past reports of College examinations, he will not, we think, be disposed to regard them as "ungenial" in their spirit. The impression created by the recent examination was not ours alone. If "groundless" (which we must not be supposed to admit), an opportunity has been given him of setting us right and of replying to our somewhat gentle criticism. No man more freely expresses dissent from others than the accomplished Professor of Philosophy in Manchester New College. We shall practise the same liberty, not only in expressing dissent, but, at the risk of a scornful rejoinder, in avowing our inability to comprehend some of the statements of modern philosophy. ED. of C. R.]

MR. SHARPE ON THE "PILLAR OF CLOUD BY DAY AND OF
FIRE BY NIGHT."

SIR,

Now that the miracles in the Bible are generally acknowledged to be a cause of difficulty rather than any help to our faith, it is important to watch the translation with exactness, to see that our translators do not increase the number of these difficulties for us. This is what they have done, I believe, in Exodus, ch. xiv., in regard to the pillar which accompanied the Israelites in their march, which was a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Armies in ancient times were, as Mr. Wellbeloved reminds us in his notes, frequently directed in their marches by a portable beacon or burning faggot, which was carried before them on a pole, and which could be seen by the whole company as a pillar of dark smoke by day and a pillar of fire by night. Such seems to have been the beacon used by the Israelites; and their historian describing them as being led out of Egypt by the will and act of the Almighty, says, in ch. xiii. 21, that Jehovah went before them in this beacon. In the next chapter, however, when the Israelites were encamped, we find that the beacon is placed between them and the Egyptians, as described in verses 19 and 20, which I would thus propose to translate:

"And the angel of God, which had before gone before the camp of the Israelites, removed and went behind them, and the pillar of the cloud went from before them and stood behind them, and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of the Israelites; and it

was a cloud and darkness [by day], but it gave light by night. And the one [army] came not near the other all the night."

It was then, in the middle of that night, that the Israelites marched through the divided waters of the Red Sea. It would seem that in their flight from the Egyptians, southward along the coast of the Red Sea, they had passed that spot at which it was suitable to attempt the passage, and hence the beacon had to be brought back into the rear and then carried eastward through the waters. In all this, though said to have been worked by a particular providence and by the immediate presence of Jehovah or an angel, there is no description of any visible miracle, any more than there is in the temporary division of the waters of the Red Sea, which was brought about by a strong east wind, and not by the suspension of any natural laws. But King James's translators, by the introduction of a few words in italics, have made a miracle for us unnecessarily. They say that the beacon was brought back "between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*; so that the one came not near the other all the night."

Mr. Wellbeloved yet more strongly marks, by inserted words, his agreement with this view of the case, and writes—"between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of the Israelites, and it was a cloud and darkness *to the Egyptians*, but it gave light by night *to the Israelites*; so that the one came not near to the other all the night."

Both translations have given a miraculous appearance to the beacon of being a cloud to the eyes of one nation and a light to the eyes of the other, for which they had no authority in the Hebrew original. The writer, with devout thankfulness for their escape out of Egypt, had seen the hand of God in every event; he says that Jehovah or an angel was present in the beacon which led them, and speaks of the east wind which blew that night as sent by God on purpose to divide the waters for them; but he says not one word of any appearance which on any other occasion would have been thought miraculous. It is only a later writer who says in ch. xv. 8, "The waters were gathered together and the floods stood upright as an heap."

S. S.

ISAIAH xi. 15, 16.

SIR,

ALLOW me briefly to notice the translation of these verses proposed in your last No. (p. 490) by your respected correspondent S. S.

(1.) "And the Lord [Jehovah] will utterly cut off the tongue of the Egyptian Sea," i.e. (S. S. thinks) "separate the Bitter Lake from the Red Sea." The verb does not, however, mean *to cut off*, but *to devote—to devote to destruction*. Hence the rendering of Noyes, "pronounce a curse upon," or that of the Authorized Version, "utterly destroy," is preferable to that of S. S. Knobel and Fürst have recently proposed for this verse the sense *to split, to cleave asunder*, without sufficient need or authority, as I think, for departing from the usual signification. By this they understand, not a cutting off of a piece of the Red Sea, so as to form a lake, but only a cleaving or dividing of the water, as in the passage by the Israelites under Moses. My own rendering

(cited by S. S.), "dried up," is founded on a slight change in the reading, for which there is authority. On the whole, I should now prefer the rendering of our Common Version. That the prophet meant by this expression, "separate the Bitter Lake from the Red Sea," is more, surely, than any one ought to assert. What evidence is there that, *in the time of Isaiah*, the Bitter Lake was still a part of the Red Sea?

(2.) "The river," S. S. thinks, is the Nile. The original most commonly denotes the Euphrates, when a specific river is meant, as in Isaiah viii. 7; and in a passage so prominently occupied (as is the whole section, Isaiah x. 5—xii. 6) with the deliverance from the *Assyrians*, the latter river ought clearly to be understood, unless some decisive reason can be assigned for the other.

(3.) "And smite it in the seven streams," i. e. the streams forming the seven mouths of the Nile; so S. S. suggests. The literal rendering is, "smite it to seven brooks" or torrents; i. e. smite the one great river into a number of small streams, such as might be forded. The context, again, I think, requires us to understand this of the Euphrates. Nothing is gained, in any way, by supposing the seven branches of the Nile to be meant, for these have never been all so dried up that they could be crossed "dry-shod;" nor could the Nile be conceived of as impeding the return of Jews either from Egypt or from Assyria. The prophet evidently means by this poetical expression, that the great Euphrates itself shall be no serious impediment to the march of the captives from the land of their enemies.

(4.) Of course that land is Assyria and the neighbouring provinces, if the river intended be the Euphrates. But this S. S. denies, understanding ver. 16, not of a "highway from Assyria," but of a highway for those who have escaped from the Assyrians and fled into Egypt. This explanation appears to me to be inadmissible. The point may be set at rest by a reference to ver. 11, where exactly the same expression occurs, and where the meaning evidently is, "recover from Assyria the remnant of his people which shall be left;" although the "from Assyria" is here too separated, by intermediate words, from the word to which it really belongs in sense.

My only doubt as to my own rendering of the verses, as cited by S. S., relates to the words "*As . . . so.*" Thinking that by his introduction of Egypt in ver. 15, Isaiah intended only a *comparison* between the new deliverance and the old one under Moses (such as he makes in ver. 16), I ventured to render the *Vaus* as I have done (comp. also x. 26). I am inclined to think that the Common Version gives here again the better rendering. I add the version of Ewald, who is hardly to be commended, however, in substituting the name *Euphrates* for "the river:"—"Und Jahve verwünscht die Zunge des ägyptischen Meeres, und schwingt seine Hand über den Eufrat mit seines Hauches Versenkung, schlägt den in sieben Flüsse, und lässt ihn mit Schuhen betreten, dass eine Bahn hat der Rest seines Volkes der aus Assur übrig bleibt, sowie sie Israel hatte als es aus Ägyptenland heraufzog." (Proph. d. A. B., i. p. 288).

Thanking your correspondent for his friendly suggestions, to which I am very sure the editors of the Revised Translation of the Old Testament will always be ready to attend, I remain, &c.,

G. VANCE SMITH.

CORRECTION OF AN ERRONEOUS STATEMENT AT THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY.

SIR,

IN your report of the late meeting of the Provincial Assembly of Lancashire and Cheshire, I notice the repetition of a statement made by the Rev. J. H. Thom respecting the signatures to the Memorial which you have very fairly recited in the early part of your report.

Your reporter, using in this instance, if I recollect right, the precise words of the speaker, writes,—“A large proportion, perhaps the majority, of the signatures were those of ladies,” and then, more curtly, quotes Mr. Thom’s taunt against the memorializers for having opened their ranks to ladies.

I am accustomed to think much of the approval of cultivated and thoughtful women, and certainly had rejoiced to find such joining, as indeed others have done before now, to bear their testimony on the side of high and pure principle; but my object in writing now is only, with your permission, to correct a misstatement of fact calculated to deceive your readers, and I will not intrude mere differences of opinion upon your pages.

I wrote all the names that were appended to the copy of the Memorial which I sent in to the Special Committee, and which I presume Mr. Thom had seen and referred to.

On examining the original signatures and authorities, from which I copied the list, I make out that I had 58 names to sign. It is possible that one or two more may have been added from memory or as many overlooked.

Of these 58, 39 I know to be those of gentlemen and 4 only to be those of ladies. The remaining 15 are those of persons whom I have not the honour of knowing; but they all sign in manly style, and appear to bear the Christian names of men.

Mr. Thom was pleased to thank the memorializers for teaching him how involuntary and blameless misrepresentation might be. In this instance at least he would seem to have misconceived the lesson.

R. D. DARBISHIRE.

Manchester, August, 1859.

MISSIONARY BRANCH OF THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY.

SIR,

IN the report given in the last No. of the *Christian Reformer* of the proceedings of the Provincial Assembly, there is an inaccuracy in the names of the Committee appointed by the Assembly to carry into effect the resolutions confirming the plan of missionary action. The gentlemen appointed on that Committee were—Rev. W. Gaskell, Rev. Dr. Beard, Rev. J. H. Thom, Rev. J. Gordon, Rev. J. Wright, Rev. F. Baker, Ivie Mackie, Esq., George Melly, Esq., H. Coppock, Esq., P. Eckersley, Esq., R. T. Heape, Esq., J. Booth, Esq., Frederick Chapple, Esq., Frederick Craven, Esq., H. A. Bright, Esq.

H. A. BRIGHT,

Secretary of the Missionary Branch.

Liverpool, August 2, 1859.

THE LATE REV. WILLIAM TURNER.

SIR,

I SEND you the subjoined extract from Mr. Turner's speech, as given in the report of the proceedings at the public dinner to him on the 21st December, 1831, printed at the *Courant* office. I send it as placing in a clearer light than the passage bearing upon the subject in the Memoir does, the part which Mr. Bragg had in the suggestion of the Jubilee School, and as an act of justice to that gentleman's memory. This report I had not seen when the passage referred to was written.

THE WRITER OF THE MEMOIR.

"As to the commencement of the Royal Jubilee School, all of you are aware that when our late venerable monarch George III. attained the 50th year of his reign, the whole nation was desirous of congratulating him upon the event by shewing every mark of respect and loyalty in their power. Among the rest, it was proposed that the inhabitants of this town should testify their affection by a general illumination. It was about that time I was met in the street by Mr. Hadwen Bragg, a most respectable member of the Society of Friends, who said, 'Is there no way to put a stop to this? During other illuminations for victories and such like, our known detestation of war has procured us some degree of respect, and we have never been subject to annoyance for not illuminating on such grounds. But as we are equally desirous with any other class to evince our loyalty and attachment to the King in a becoming manner, we shall be particularly liable to attack if, through principle, we decline lighting our houses on such an occasion.' He then proposed that, as his Majesty had lately granted an interview to Joseph Lancaster, and expressed to him his wish that every poor child in the kingdom might be able to read the Bible, I should endeavour to make this the occasion of doing something towards effecting that object. Soon after, a very worthy friend, who was then engaged in the Russia trade, said to me concerning the proposed illumination, that in that time of war, tallow being extremely dear, it would be a pity to see it wasted in such a way. It immediately struck me that by putting the commercial and the religious consideration together, I might draw out a petition to the Corporation which would have some effect. I accordingly waited upon my friend Mr. Smith, the late vicar, and we set to work and drew up a petition, which we got engrossed and presented in due form. The members of the Corporation were so much pleased with the idea, that they immediately discouraged the illumination, and requested the principal inhabitants to go about from house to house, and solicit subscriptions to the amount each family intended to lay out in candles, many of them, especially the Quakers, giving much more, and the Corporation devoting 300 guineas to the object."

INTELLIGENCE.

NEW UNITARIAN CHURCH, SOUTHAMPTON.

The interesting ceremony of laying the chief corner-stone of the new Unitarian church at Southampton, to be called "The Church of the Saviour," took place at three o'clock on the afternoon of July 27. The site is at Bellevue Place, opposite Carlton Crescent, and near the Ordnance Map Office. A spacious awning was erected in front of the intended edifice for the accommodation of the congregation and visitors. The architect is Mr. Philip Brannon, well known for several popular works on the architecture and geology of the district. The builder is Mr. G. W. Chinnock, of Chichester, who has done much ecclesiastical work under the best Gothic architects of our day. The contract for the main structure and fittings is £1899. The warming, lighting and fencing, are reserved for separate contracts. The site was purchased for £312. 10s. About £800 still remains to be raised. Mr. Brannon had prepared several designs for the choice of the Building Committee, one in the Decorated English style, but the Committee selected the Early English composition; for although the rich and varied forms and tracery of the Decorated English design were inviting, they were resolved that no act of theirs should incur expenditure beyond that which the object to which the building was to be consecrated demanded; and even from this Early English design they cut off the porches, and refused to entertain all idea of a tower, spire or belfry. The church is in five bays, and its interior length is 69 feet by 32 clear. Externally the buttresses terminate in gabled heads breaking the line of eaves; and the chimneys to the furnace, &c., are converted into highly ornamental features. The side windows are triplets, broken by some lower lateral lights and an agreeable interchange of trefoil and lancet heads. At the east end is a wheel, simple but original in design; and the west front presents a bold septet, of which the two side openings are treated as panels, to be decorated with Scripture legends or scroll flowering. Corsham-down stone is being used for the whole of the window and door dressings, strings, water tables, and gable and buttress finishings. A little Tisbury, Tiffont and Isle-of-Wight North-stone is used, but the main walling is of Swanage rubble, hammer-dressed, the quoinings consisting of the same, with a simple draft or a chamfer on the angles. The lime is the best stone

or blue lias, and the timber is of the best Memel or other Baltic kinds, with some oak and pitch pine.

Internally it is open-roofed, and it is intended to keep the boarding of a light tone or almost a natural tint, and to make the framework only of a dark tint. The principals will spring low down the wall from a battlemented corbel, with shaft below, and above a bold arch, without tie-beam, rises from the wall-posts, measuring in the clear from side to side 30 feet, and 38 feet high from the floor to the under side of the arched rib, or 44 feet from the floor to the under side of the slate boarding in the ridge.

The ministers who were to take part in the service having ascended the platform erected before the corner-stone, the Rev. M. Rowntree commenced by reading the 67th Psalm and 1 Cor. xiii.

The Treasurer of the congregation, Edward Dixon, Esq., of Upton House, then expressed his regret that he had to announce that Mark Philips, Esq., who had promised to lay the corner-stone, had sent a telegraphic message to state that he was prevented by a sudden attack of illness from being present. Mr. Dixon said he had therefore been deputed by the congregation to request some gentleman to act as his substitute, and agreeing with the wishes of those who had conferred with him on the subject, he had much pleasure in requesting their pastor to lay the corner-stone. It was a most important and momentous day to the congregation; and no one was so suited as Rev. E. Kell to undertake the important ceremonial, for he had been most assiduous in his labours to build up their Christian church, and had always shewn himself the zealous advocate of civil and religious freedom. There were various opinions on religious subjects, but he hoped that all uncharitable feeling would die away, and that the people at large would feel the importance of the chapter on charity now read by Rev. M. Rowntree. Mr. Dixon then handed Mr. Kell the trowel.

Mr. KELL said he exceedingly regretted the absence of his highly-esteemed friend and fellow-student, Mark Philips, Esq., and felt it a high compliment paid him in being called on to lay the corner-stone. (The stone was here lowered into its place, Mr. Kell adjusting it under Mr. Chinnock's direction.) He then read a letter from Mr. Philips, of which the following is an extract. After stating the

circumstances of sudden illness which had prevented his attendance, and offering his best wishes for the progress of their Christian church, he added: "Our faith is not fashionable. It is not the faith of the aristocracy, and invites to no promotion in Church and State. Amongst those who so read their Bible that it does not teach them charity, we are still on too many occasions spoken of and acted towards with undisguised dislike and bitterness. But we do not live for the sake of the opinion of others; we have a far higher duty to perform. Satisfied of the truth of our own opinions, with minds which will not bear the imposition of a creed by Act of Parliament or at the mere will and caprice of an autocrat, we reject the tyranny of a State religion, and claim to interpret Scripture in accordance with free and unfettered inquiry, desirous of arriving at truth without bias, and trusting in God that we may, through our Saviour, find acceptance in His sight for acting in strict and honest accordance with our conscience."

Mr. Kell then said: "Christian brethren,—We have met to-day in realization of our long-time cherished and earnest desire to lay the chief corner-stone of our new house of prayer. Our first aim has been to fix the place of our assembling where we can best glorify our God and Father by proclaiming his hallowed truth. For our own poor sakes alone we might not have put our hands to such an effort, for an anxious effort it is. But we trust we act under a high consciousness that a holy charge is committed to us, that a purer light shines with its bright and glad rays in our church than that which burns in other churches. And, on the Saviour's authority, we would place it where it may best diffuse its heavenly beams. Nor is the truth with which we believe ourselves pre-eminently blessed one of *small moment*. No, it is that which touches the whole teaching of the first and greatest of all the commandments, which in the clearest language affirms that 'the Lord our God is one Lord.' It is for holding this great truth we stand apart, an outcast sect from other Christians, to raise our voice for Jesus' holy teaching, to speak our precious faith in God our Father's free, unpurchased love towards all the human race. To hold a faith so sweet to filial love, this is indeed a gift and privilege. An outcast sect we are to-day. So was of yore the apostolic band, and so were all the early followers of the great Captain Leader. An outcast sect we are; but faith assures us that other days shall dawn when those among us who with noble spirits can joy to bear reproach and shame for Jesus' sake,

shall have a name of highest honour in the wide-spread Christian fold. Call ye this thought ambition? It *is* ambition; but it is ambition to which the Saviour's words give countenance. It will not taint the Christian's motives now. It will not bring its recompence until his spirit passes from this earth, and he shall hear the thrilling testimony of the Judge of all, and feel that all earth's praises are blest only if approved by Him. Purified, elevated by the influence of that hereafter, be the spirit with which we build an altar to the Lord our God!

"Brethren, we have great responsibility in the work before us. Let us look with steady purpose on its holy claim upon our zeal, which calls upon us in rearing our new temple to act on every motive which stirs the human heart. Let us remember that Jehovah willed even while He led the Hebrew nation through the wilderness, that they should have a tabernacle meet for that peculiar people which might touch and quicken every emotion which could draw their hearts to Him. And the temple in Jerusalem, erected under especial divine guidance, sacred to the Jewish heart even while the builder's hand was rearing it, far exceeded in splendour and in beauty all edifices which the nation's wealth and skill had raised for human occupation or for worldly purpose. I do not forget that we have passed to a more spiritual priesthood, that Jesus hath declared that not in that holy temple peculiarly should man henceforth worship the Father. But our more spiritual faith gives no countenance to that cold and unnatural philosophy which would tell us that spiritual affection, pure religious worship, is uninfluenced by time or place.

"My brethren, we are human still; and external things, do what we will, *will* move and stir us. I do not think that there is a single human being, be he philosopher or untutored peasant, who can gaze, unmoved by feelings which would attune the soul for worship, far into the lofty fretted vault of the solemn cathedral edifice. And I would ask, *Is* it sound philosophy to scorn such influences? *Is* it well that *we*, according to our humble powers, should be niggard of the means which are within our reach? Much of the fruits of noble sacrifice for truth comes down to us from those whose work on earth now has its record in the book of life. What right have *we* to rest on efforts *they* have made? None! Let us, therefore, do our part for those who shall succeed us. Let fathers now bequeath their children, in *their* sacrifice for truth, their speaking testimony of the value which they have of that pure

worship in which, in company with their fellow-mortals, they have raised their thoughts to heaven.

"I think I may say to you, my fellow-worshippers, that with hearty zeal you have begun the work of bringing offerings for your future temple. In the same spirit may you persevere and conquer every difficulty. I would that every child among us should entitle itself to treasure in its memory for after years that it has had the honour of contributing its portion; and I would that the lesson which the Saviour left us when he watched the widow casting mites into the treasury, may stimulate our poor to give the aid they can. Let each and all give freely and with cheerful heart, for it is right and good that the building we raise shall prove itself not unworthy of its exalted object. O let us make every effort that we may enter it, and with our first prayer dedicate it to the one sole Object whom we worship, free from all debt, all charge!

"Brethren, I have spoken warmly on this subject. It is one which indeed claims our deep, our earnest consideration, our *Christian* consideration. Guided by the noble devotion of our great Master, may we labour in his cause! May his holy zeal and his blest peace be with us and rest upon us! May we breathe something of the spirit which animated him when he exclaimed, 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up!'

"Brethren, we have named our church '*The Church of the Saviour.*' And we who have come out from other churches because we would own no other Master than him who was declared by words from heaven to be the beloved Son of God, because his words alone and those of his commissioned messengers we follow as our guide to life eternal, we have especial right to call our house of prayer emphatically '*the Saviour's Church.*'

"And what though other churches cast us out as 'heretics'? What though they may deny that we have right and title to be the Saviour's Church? They cannot say, at least in truth they cannot say, but that the words of Jesus are our only creed. They know that his own lips affirmed that 'the Lord our God is one Lord.' They know that the great Teacher said that 'the true worshippers shall worship the Father,' of whom he spake as 'his Father and our Father, as his God and our God.' They know that to Him he prayed, to Him resigned his will, and that when he had finished the work his Father had given him to do, to Him he yielded up his spirit. O, brethren, let us be disciples of the Saviour in our hearts' devotion, *his* in

purity of life as we are *his* in faith, and all shall be well with us! Let us strive to realize in every thought and deed his ardent prayer that we might be one with him *as* he was one with God, one with *him* and one with God, and we shall have the Saviour's legacy of 'peace.' And though we be dishonoured among men, even as the early disciples were dishonoured, we may patiently wait, for the great day *shall* come when the prophecy shall be fulfilled, that 'Jehovah's name shall be one, and his worship one.'"

Mr. Kell then offered a prayer, which was followed by the assembly joining in the hymn, "From all that dwell below the skies."

Rev. HENRY HAWKES next addressed the meeting. Having dwelt on the various sacred, happy privileges to be enjoyed by the congregation in the church now erecting, he proceeded—"How finely attuned should be the souls of all, as the several worshippers come up from all directions to this one all-harmonizing home of Christian brotherhood! How expressive and excellent should be every varying act of worship and appeal, to be in accordance with souls so beautifully attuned, and help to swell the generous outflowings of thanksgiving and prayer; with nothing to check, in one heart, the ardent freedom of feeling and utterance; and in all, the power of the mightiest emulation of voice and countenance and deportment,—with nothing to shock or alarm or distress the tenderest sentiment of the most gentle and beautiful in spirit! What diligent preparation do these mingling offerings of voice and conduct imply on the part of each several worshiper before he enter this house, that all he says and does may be in accordance with the sacred work; that no tone, no want of comeliness in conduct, may jar upon the devotions of the most diligently prepared, the most alive and sensitive in Christian feeling!

"In your adopted mode of worship, my friends, the only part in which your congregated voices are to be heard together is in the singing of the hymn. Have you considered well what preparation this offering of worship requires of each of you individually in his own culture of vocal expression, and in your combined practice of congregated utterance of many souls in one voice; that you may solemnize your hymns—an offering not unworthy the divine service; intelligent, expressive, delightful to every awakened interest? Never forget, I entreat you, that music in the divine service can never be indifferent to any worshiper capable of feeling its power and grieving over its inefficiency. It must

either be a positive enjoyment and delight, or a painful despoiling of worship. Well uttered, delightfully in character with the song of praise, the swelling voices of a whole congregation singing together with freedom of utterance, with all their native powers of vocal expression clearly at command, spontaneously expressing every gentle, every most mighty and buoyant aspiration of the full heart, with variable sweetness and volumed force, indefinable, but felt in all its sacred expressiveness, lifts the soul to heaven. But, remember, this power of utterance demands preparation. God has created you with this power of voice; but the power of using it aright in his praise, he has left,—a sacred, an invaluable responsibility,—to your own self-culture. The miserable abortions of what is commonly called congregational singing, so distressing to the devout heart, are to be no criterion for a Christian church in earnest. Weigh well how much you, each of you, owe to the rest of your fellow-worshippers; what is the duty you owe to your Creator and Father; that by your diligent and persevering preparation of yourselves in your homes beforehand, you may celebrate aright your share when you rise with your brethren in this house to solemnize your congregated hymns of thanksgiving and praise."

Mr. Hawkes then, regarding the rising sanctuary as designed to be a house of prayer, laid the like stress upon what would be required from the congregation, individually and collectively, in order to their right enjoyment and support of the devotions of this Church of the Saviour. "But not for yourselves only," he went on to say, "do you build this house. Believing that you hold the truth as it is in Jesus, you are desirous that others should enjoy the same light and be led into the same fold. I believe you are right; and I pray God that your earnestness and consistency and perseverance may be equal to the evangelizing work. While we would have every one free to worship God according to his conscience, however widely differing from ourselves, still, believing that we have gained a nearer approach to Christ, we believe that we have a better treasure to offer them, a purer light of truth, a more beautiful and elevating and soul-satisfying religion, than they have yet attained to; and therefore, as we would be more blessed ourselves in the like position, it is our duty in Christ to make the glad tidings known with all our best endeavour to those without. With the devotedness of Christ and the apostles, the work is the same work for us to do. As you would bless a brother, as you would help forward fellow-mortals

craving for salvation, let no compromise of yours, no negligence, no vagueness of expression, no inconsistency of conduct, no making light of the truths, the facts, the divine sanctions of the gospel, hinder or disincline a fellow-pilgrim heavenward from casting in his lot among you. Remember, it is your earnestness, your perseverance, proofs unquestionable that your whole souls are interested in what you are about, that is to inspire those without with confidence, and to encourage them to join you. What has been the fact hitherto? Have all been struck with this determined earnestness,—this deep, generous power of self-devotedness to your chosen work as a Christian congregation? Is there no room for amendment? Is there no call for greater effort—for more earnest, more powerful, more generous working together? that while you grow more vigorously yourselves in the strength of your Redeemer, you may more powerfully impress others and win souls to salvation?

"Say not, *This is the preacher's function.* Every Christian should be an evangelist. If you enjoy the glad tidings of salvation, if you hold them dear to your souls, will not the Christ-like spirit rejoice to make them known to others; that others, wherever your influence can be felt and however exerted, may receive of the same blessedness? And shall you rejoice the less that they will bless you the more for the precious gift? Let every one, let every sister among you, become an evangelist. The sister's heart can feel as deeply, can love as fervently, as sacredly, as persuasively, as the brother's; and remember, Christ placed the standard of salvation not in the head, but in the heart—'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' By every look and word and action of yours, let it be felt that you are Christian, that your religion makes you happy, and that you would have every fellow-creature as happy as yourselves.

"But I grant it is the duty, the privilege of your pastor to preach the glad tidings of salvation. And my prayer for my brother minister is, that God may give him strength and all needful help and encouragement for this best and happiest of works. He will need great strength and great encouragement. A minister's duties are never done. However faithful and efficient, the Christian minister will never have equalled the work before him. In season and out of season, his soul is to be ever about his ministry; in public and in private, his self-devotedness is to be unwearied. What others may plead as an excuse for absence, is to be no excuse

for him. Whatever the inclemencies, the storminess, the oppressive heats, the alluring pleasantness of the season, the pastor is to be always at his post; and if he find his flock scattered and rambling from the fold, will not his heart bleed? Support your pastor's spirit by your persevering assemblings in this house. If your pastor can be constant and punctual in his presence before God, cannot you? Your pastor needs such cheering encouragement. Though he have the self-devotedness, the unflinching endurance of an apostle, remember he has the heart of a man. And the faithful pastor will have, in the best of circumstances, sufficient to try that heart. The faithful pastor will live for his people. He will rejoice in your joys and sorrow in your sorrows. He will watch with untiring care every fluctuation of your growth or decline in the spirit; and while the faithfulness of the faithful will enlarge his strength and confirm his assurance, the fallings-short of the wavering and inconstant, the wrong-doings of the unfaithful, will wring his soul and bow down his spirit in grieving anguish. And yet, with all these personal cares and sympathies to try his soul at times almost to exhaustion, his study, in its quiet retirement, is to find him faithful and diligent there, devoting a large portion of his life to the gathering up of food for the various nurture of his flock, sustaining and refreshing through many years. In the public institutions, the general interests of the large and flourishing community in the midst of which you assemble, your minister, as an educated man and an enlightened philanthropist, is expected to take an active part, not unfrequently a lead; responsibilities, every one, while generous and welcome to his heart, demanding no slight labours of both head and heart and hand perseveringly and worthily to carry forward. And in the midst of all these, and many more claims upon him of kindred interest innumerable, and all of weighty requirements, every Sabbath is to find him in this house, leading your devotions, expounding the sacred Scriptures, animating your thanksgivings and praise, instructing you and your families in a higher than earthly wisdom, exhorting and emulating you in ever-advancing piety and growth in salvation. That he should at all times be equally fresh in his own vigour for these Sabbath duties, none can expect. With whatever care and circumspection, your pastor's health and strength will at times fluctuate. And yet, while the bare possibility of his conducting the Sabbath services remains, however depressed in spirit

or enfeebled in health, your pastor, as regularly as the Sabbath comes round, is to be found at his post. How generous and cherishing should be a congregation's kind, sympathizing, friendly, hearty support of a man who thus labours and lives for them! You are to remember that your pastor stands alone among the many pastors of this large population. While others may readily find aid and relief for a Sabbath when incidentally desiring rest from labour, not so your pastor. From your position among the surrounding denominations, there is no minister at hand whom you could desire, from differences of belief, to occupy the place of your own in this sanctuary of your worship. How largely, then, does it become you to sustain and encourage his labours in such cumulative and never-ceasing duties! You wish your best of causes to prosper. You look to your preacher to plead your cause with onward persuasiveness. And how would you have the preacher's voice the most powerful in its appeal, the most buoyant, the most delightfully impressive, deeply persuasive? By letting him find your places frequently vacant as he enters this house, so that his heart is ready to sink within him from the first step over your threshold? By your desultory droppings-in, by a laxity of manner and tone disgraceful to the work you profess to wish well to, and almost breaking to your pastor's heart? No!—unquestionably, No! But by your constant attendance, by your earnestness, by your hearty co-operation, assuring him, that, as others are induced to look in and observe your devotions, they shall find a brotherly unity and love, a vitality of earnestness, that needeth not that any should feel ashamed."

Mr. Hawkes closed with a very earnest call for more zeal, urging reasons why the zeal of Unitarians, situated as we now are, should exceed that of all other denominations of Christians, if we would carry our best of causes resistlessly into their midst, and see it prospering, as it deserves, beyond all the rest.

Rev. R. Shelley, of Newbury, then offered a prayer, which was followed by a benediction from the Rev. H. E. Howse.

The assembly then adjourned to the chapel, Upper Canal Walk, to partake of tea. Rev. E. Kell filled the chair, and various interesting addresses were delivered.

The first sentiment proposed by the Chairman was received with much emotion—"Prosperity to the New Unitarian Church, 'the Church of the Saviour,' the chief corner-stone of which had been laid that day. May it prove a blessing to

many successive generations of worshipers!" He next proposed, "That the best thanks of the meeting be presented to the Chapel Building Committee and to its Chairman, Edward Dixon, Esq.," which was feelingly responded to by that gentleman. — The Chairman then proposed, "That this meeting begs to congratulate the Presbyterian congregation at Newbury, on the successful result of their legal struggle in defence of their rights, and to present their best wishes for the health and happiness of the Rev. R. Shelley," to which Mr. Shelley ably responded. — Rev. H. Hawkes spoke to the sentiment, "Christian consistency the best liberality." — The Chairman proposed, "Success to Sunday-school instruction," which was responded to by Mr. H. Blessly, of Portsmouth. — "Our best thanks to our friends from a distance," was acknowledged by Rev. M. Rowntree and John Sheppard, Esq. Several appropriate hymns were sung in the course of the evening, and the proceedings of this spirited and harmonious social gathering were terminated with prayer by the Chairman.

KENT AND SUSSEX UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION.

On Wednesday, Aug. 3, the forty-seventh anniversary of this Society was celebrated in the Blackfriars' chapel, Canterbury. The interest of the meeting was considerably heightened by the venerable building in which it was held, which once formed a part of the possessions of a priory of Dominicans located in St. Alphage's parish. This brotherhood appears to have obtained a footing here about the year 1221, under the patronage of Henry III., who is reported to have built for the order a monastery on the banks of the Stour, on land granted by Archbishop Langdon. Of the various additions which from time to time were made to the original institution, there remain only the building, formerly the refectory of the monks, which has been long used as a General Baptist (Unitarian) meeting-house, and the edifice on the opposite side of the river, heretofore their dormitory, but now converted into dwellings. At the dissolution of the monasteries, temp. Henry VIII., the property of the Blackfriars was vested in the Crown; and after many changes, we find it, in 1688, in the possession of Peter Peters, M.D., from whom in all probability the portion forming the present General Baptist chapel and burial-ground was purchased. The transfer of the refectory of the Dominican monks to the Baptists appears to have taken place about this period (1688); since we learn from a MS. book of Priscilla Taverner, in the pos-

session of the late Mrs. Pierce, of Dover, that she "was married, April 22, 1691, at Canterbury, at the Friars, to James Redding, by Mr. Hobbs, pastor of the Dover church."

If we may suppose disembodied spirits cognizant of what is passing on earth, the souls of the former occupants of the Friars must have witnessed with no ordinary degree of complacency the gathering of Unitarian Nonconformists in the ancient dining-hall of the Dominican fraternity on the 3rd ult. Preaching friars as they were, whose special function was the instruction and conversion of the unenlightened and the preservation of the gospel faith in unadulterated purity, they must have heard with unmeasured satisfaction the eloquent exposition and illustration of the simple truths and principles of Christianity supplied by the Rev. R. B. Aspland, from the words in Acts x. 24, 25. Nor can we imagine that their gratification would sustain any diminution by contrast of the large and tolerant spirit characterizing Mr. A.'s discourse, with the persecuting means once favoured by themselves as members of a brotherhood famous and infamous for its missionary administration of those "terrors of the Lord" which are familiar to the practice of the Inquisition. Doubtless in the spiritual condition which we picture, freed from the films that obscured their earthly vision, and seeing no longer as through a glass darkly, a comparison of the spectacle presented at the celebration of the forty-seventh anniversary of the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Christian Association, with the sanguinary scenes and methods of which they had once been instigators and instruments, would furnish them with abundant cause to rejoice that the strong man armed had spoiled their inheritance, swept and garnished their house, installed in the place of their habitation a better spirit, and rendered its last state superior to the first.

Forsaking fancy, however, and keeping to the region of sober fact, it may be alleged that everything contributed to make the forty-seventh annual meeting of the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Christian Association a most agreeable and successful re-union. The interesting historical associations belonging to the place of meeting, the brilliant weather that marked the day, the numerous and respectable company gathered within the chapel, the appropriate character of the services, their introduction by the Rev. R. E. B. Maclellan, many years minister of the congregation assembling at the Friars,—all these circumstances favoured the occasion, and conspired to render it one of good augury and full of pleasant reminiscence for the future.

From the chapel a large proportion of the audience adjourned to the Fountain hotel, where, to the number of between 60 and 70 ladies and gentlemen, they partook together of a substantial dinner, under the presidency of the Rev. W. Smith,—Mr. John Brent occupying the vice-chair. After the cloth was drawn, the Chairman, in a few introductory observations, proposed the health of "Our Sovereign Lady, the Queen," which was duly acknowledged, the choir of the Friars' chapel singing a part of the National Anthem, and the company heartily joining in the strain.

The Chairman next gave, "Civil and Religious Liberty all the World over." As usual, this toast was enthusiastically received. Mr. John Brent, the Vice-chairman, responded to it in terms befitting its importance. In doing so, he drew attention to the progress that had been made during the last quarter of a century in extending the area of freedom, and to the impediments that still existed to individual and social independence, deriving from each an argument for increased zeal, vigilance and action in the same direction. He then eloquently denounced the encroachments upon civil and religious liberty by continental states; expressed his hearty sympathy with the aspirations and efforts of Italian patriotism; and warned the assembly how the hopes and aims of the enslaved in every region of the globe centred in England, as the home of freedom, the advocate of the down-trodden, and the general refuge of the oppressed.

After "The Kent and Sussex Unitarian Christian Association" had been proposed, Rev. R. E. B. Maclellan, the Secretary, read the following report:

"In presenting their forty-seventh annual report, your Committee have but few changes to record either in the position or the prospects of the churches connected with this Association. Though our Society is designated the "*Kent and Sussex*" Association, yet for many years it has been practically limited to the county in which we are assembled, Battle and Northiam being the only places in Sussex which have been in the habit of sending representatives to our annual re-union. As you are aware, the congregations in Kent holding Unitarian sentiments amount to eleven, namely, Bessel's Green, Canterbury, Chatham, Cranbrook, Deal, Deptford, Dover, Headcorn, Rolvenden, belonging to the General Baptists; and Tenterden and Maidstone, founded by the English Presbyterians. Of these, three are at present without stated ministers, viz. Chatham, Cranbrook and Rolvenden. Chatham is frequently supplied by the students of Manchester New

College, and, when other means fail, the services are conducted by a lay gentleman belonging to the society, whose zeal and consistency claim our highest esteem. Cranbrook has a visit from the Rev. W. H. Black, of London, about once a month, and on other occasions is supplied with lay preaching. Rolvenden has of late years been indebted almost exclusively to the minister and one or two of the members of the Tenterden congregation, and to a well-known and valued friend at Bidden-den, for travelling some distance to aid them in conducting their social worship.

"Since our last anniversary, some of the churches embraced by our organization have been deprived by death of some of their most valued members, persons whose lives fully demonstrated the moralizing and spiritualizing power of the doctrines to which they were so fondly attached, but whose names cannot be mentioned here. Of those among the removed who occupied a more *public* position, the Canterbury congregation has to regret the loss of Mr. Thomas Clark, a man much respected as a citizen, and known to the religious world, not only at home but abroad, by his contributions to the stores of sacred music. Not only the little society at Northiam, over which he presided, but our whole Association, has cause to lament the decease, in January last, of the Rev. John Edwards, at the advanced age of 78 years. To great zeal for what he believed to be 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' he united the strictest uprightness and integrity, and a benevolence which extended to those of every creed and denomination. No one who has heard him expatiate (as we all have done) on the Fatherly character of God, but must have seen and felt that Unitarianism had been unto him 'the savour of life unto life;' and no one who knew (as we all did) the cheerfulness, nay the joyousness, of his nature up to his latest hour, but must have concluded that he had indeed found in the gospel a system of 'glad tidings.'

"When any of the congregations in our county exhibit symptoms of decline, it is some consolation to reflect that it is solely attributable to death, to emigration, or to removal to other parts of the kingdom. Lapses from Unitarianism to what is generally called Orthodoxy are almost unknown amongst us. Notwithstanding that the importance and duty of firm adherence to principle are earnestly and unremittingly inculcated from all our pulpits, it may indeed sometimes happen that the young and the thoughtless, who have no well-considered opinions on any subject, and least of all on those of religion or theology,

may be drawn into the Establishment by the allurements of fashion or the desire to better their social position; but such instances are rare, and we believe the case is almost unknown that full-grown men, or women either, who thoroughly understand the simplicity and beauty, the reasonableness and scripturality of our faith, ever exchange it for any form of Athanasianism or Calvinism.

"If, however, there be decay from deaths or removals in some of the churches in the county, there is increase in others; and perhaps it might be deemed correct if the assertion were made, that there is scarce a society within our boundaries to which some additions have not been made even within the last few years. These additions come not indeed from the ranks of the wealthy and the influential, but generally from the working class or the class immediately above it; and they are composed in most instances of persons who have tried every existing administration of the popular Christianity, and found them incapable of satisfying either the fair demands of their understandings or the natural emotions of their hearts. Probably there is no minister now present who has not had the exquisite pleasure of listening to the outpourings of thankfulness from one or more such converts, that God in his mercy had conducted them at last to the Unitarian exposition of the gospel, accompanied by expressions of sorrow that they had not sooner become acquainted with its purity and its peace.

"If there be some few causes for regret in contemplating the present condition of some of our associated churches, there is also, as has been seen, some cause for gratulation; and this feeling is increased if we confine not our view to our own little corner of the island, but extend it over the kingdom generally. At the various Whitsuntide meetings in London, it seemed to be the universal impression and conviction that never throughout the whole of its history did our denomination occupy a more promising position in these lands than at the present hour. Never, it was said, were the great bulk of our congregations in England more flourishing; never were their connected institutions more generously supported; never were day-schools and Sunday-schools and Domestic Missions more earnestly worked; never was there in the body generally so large an amount of philanthropic effort. If these statements be correct (which your Committee see no good reasons to doubt), our hearts should be uplifted in gratitude to God, who has poured the showers of this especial mercy in such abundance over the vineyards of our brethren in the faith; even though so little of its fertilizing

moisture has as yet reached our own small meads and pastures. Nor should we forget that we are all members one of another; that our tiny congregations in Kent are nevertheless a constituent portion of the general church of the Father herein Britain; and that if the whole frame have indeed received from heaven additional strength and vitality, it cannot well be but that the most trifling or distant part shall become an eventual partaker of its prosperity.

"Your Committee therefore would remind themselves, and urge it earnestly upon you, that casting aside all despondency and lukewarmness, our great duty is to *work and wait*. Let not only every minister but every layman, not only every man but every woman, by pulpit and pastoral exertions in the one case, and in the others by giving of our property, by giving of our influence, by giving of our attendance at the house of God, by giving of our Christian example in society, by giving of our self-sacrifices for the promotion of the highest good of our fellow-townsmen or fellow-creatures, do what in us lies for the support and adornment and recommendation to others of our peculiar views of the religion of Jesus; and a blessing *must* descend both on ourselves and our churches. It may not take the shape we wish, and it may not come precisely at the time we wish; but we best shew our faith in the wisdom and love of the infinite Father, by labouring while we may, and leaving it entirely in His hands at what date and in what form to send the benediction."

The report being read, Mr. Maclellan, in a few judicious and appropriate words, commended it to the adoption of the meeting. The Rev. E. Talbot, of Tenterden, seconded the proposition. The motion having been put and unanimously carried, the Rev. R. B. Aspland now rose to acknowledge, "The Preacher of the day, and thanks to him for his able and suitable discourse."

In the course of his remarks, Mr. Aspland made many happy allusions to the historical locality in which the meeting was held. Referring to the loveliness of the neighbourhood in which they were assembled, he took occasion to express his conviction that it was the destiny of Christianity at no distant day to flourish in a renovated beauty corresponding to the glorious scenery of nature surrounding them. Then, reminding his hearers that Canterbury was the birthplace and cradle of British Christianity, he drew a parallel between Pagan and Christian Britain, suggesting that, if the heathen darkness of the island were thus supplanted by the light of the gospel, it was not unreasonable to cherish the expectation that the prevailing

corruptions of its doctrine would ultimately succumb to the purer profession of its truth by Unitarians. Mr. A. concluded his address by congratulating the meeting upon the buoyant and hopeful spirit that pervaded it; and by condemning the despondent or captious and complaining tone that has characterized some Unitarian utterances and self-criticisms, a tone equally causeless and impolitic, justified neither by the actual nor the relative position of Unitarians.

The Rev. S. J. MAY, of Syracuse, U.S., whose presence as a representative of Transatlantic Unitarianism was warmly welcomed, spoke to the sentiment, "A heart union between England and America. May the sympathy and example of England quicken the removal of the fetters of the Slave, and the example and sympathy of America hasten the removal of the last fetters of English ecclesiastical bondage!" The Rev. gentleman said that he sincerely reciprocated the words which the Chairman had done him the honour to associate with his name. The identity between the two nations was such, he urged, that the assumption of a hostile attitude towards each other would be as detrimental as domestic discord in a family, or civil strife in a nation—perfectly suicidal. Were not the people of the two countries "of one blood"? Had they not the same virtues and the same vices, the same liberties and laws, the same language and literature, the same spirit of enterprize and love of independence, the same aims, interests and aspirations? Was not the glory of Britain equally the glory of America? Did not he and his countrymen hail the long line of English worthies as amongst their own ancestry? It was true, he must confess, that England was in advance of the United States in the "great fact" of Negro emancipation; nevertheless, he felt every confidence in the progress of the Anti-slavery cause in America and its certain triumph. He perceived in the rapidly increasing *free* population of the Southern States the ultimate solution of the question, and he rejoiced in the prospect. Yet he must warn his English friends lest they should permit in their West Indian colonies the revival of slavery under another name. He could assure them, from his own observation, that there was no small peril of its re-integration under the disguise of Coolie-labour; and that the utmost vigilance and determination on their part was requisite to prevent this species of enforced servitude lapsing into the hateful forms of personal bondage. Mr. May then entreated the forbearance of his audience whilst he told them that, though England had one blot less than America in one aspect of its con-

dition, it had one blemish more in another feature of its actual state. They had a *free church* in his country; and he felt amazed that a people so jealous of their independence as the British, should tolerate the invasion of their most sacred rights and privileges that existed in the ecclesiastical establishments of the land. Why, their souls were made merchandize of! They were bought and sold, advertised and bargained for, like so much marketable commodity! When he returned home and informed his countrymen what he had witnessed in this respect, he should scarce be credited; they had no conception of such a state of things. For himself, he would say, that this gross infraction of the spiritual prerogatives of a whole people appeared an intolerable outrage of all that constitutes the proper dignity of man. So repugnant was it to all his ideas, habits and feelings, that whilst the other daysauntering through the beautiful cathedral of the city, he was almost tempted to wish its obliteration from the face of the earth; for he could not help suspecting that the glorious proportions of such edifices had much to do with diverting attention from the deformities of the system with which they were allied, and reconciling the public mind to the injustice upon which that system was based. Mr. M. closed an animated speech by expressing his hope that an honourable rivalry of each other's excellences would long continue between England and America; that the example of England in emancipating her slaves would soon be followed by his countrymen; and that their example of a free gospel and a free church would speedily be copied by the mother country.

"Unitarian Catholic Christianity," was acknowledged by the Rev. E. Talbot, who shewed how all the essential characteristics of catholicity were to be found in the Unitarian church.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman closed the proceedings at the dinner. The company made their way again to the chapel, where, after tea, they were addressed by the Rev. R. E. B. Maclellan and Mr. John Brent, on the duties, dangers and prospects of Unitarians. The choir also lent an agreeable interest to the evening by their musical performances. The meeting now terminated with prayer by the Rev. W. Smith, and the company separated to their homes with the impression of a day pleasantly and profitably spent.

WARWICKSHIRE UNITARIAN TRACT SOCIETY.

The fifty-third annual general meeting of this Society was held in the Park-Lane chapel, Cradley, on Wednesday, August 24th. There was a very large attendance

on the chapel services, which were introduced by Rev. Dr. Davison, of Dudley. The sermon was preached by Rev. David Maginnis, of Belfast, from Matt. vii. 20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." From these words, the preacher set forth, in a very eloquent and impressive manner, the leading characteristics of Unitarian Christianity. In a resolution of thanks to the preacher, subsequently passed at the meeting for business, Frank Evers, Esq., in the chair, this sermon was justly described as "truly Christian and eminently instructive;" and a request was made that Mr. Maginnis would favour the Society with a copy of it for publication; a request with which he kindly expressed his compliance. In order to meet the expense of publication, a collection was immediately made, as the Society had no funds in hand for the purpose. The sermon will therefore be shortly published in a cheap form; and on this account we refrain from giving any analysis of it, believing that the readers of the Christian Reformer will accept the guarantee of its excellence which was afforded by the warm and unanimous approval of the meeting, and will read it and judge for themselves.—Twelve additional subscribers were afterwards admitted as members of the Society. About ninety ladies and gentlemen subsequently dined together under the able presidency of the Rev. William Cochrane, when many liberal sentiments were proposed, and some suggestions made for extending the influence and increasing the usefulness of the Society.

LIST OF PREACHERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS
AT CLEATOR.

1859. July 31, Rev. William Gaskell, M.A., Manchester—Morning: Christian Discipleship (Luke vi. 46). Afternoon: The use of Trials (Gen. xlii. latter part of 34).

Aug. 28, Rev. Henry Green, A.M., Knutsford—Morning: The Realities of Religion (Isaiah liv. 10). Afternoon: The Doctrines of Christianity (Titus i. 1).

Sept. 25, Rev. Franklin Baker, A.M., Bolton-le-Moors—Morning: Man—his nature, his condition and his prospects (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10). Afternoon: On being ashamed of Christ (Luke ix. 26).

Oct. 30, Rev. Dr. Beard, Manchester—Morning: The Higher Life (John iii. 17). Afternoon: The Comforter (John xv. 26).

Nov. 27, Rev. H. Solly, Lancaster—Morning: Our Father who art in Heaven (Matt. vi. 9). Afternoon: Almost a Christian (Acts xxvi. 28, 29).

Dec. 25, Rev. John Colston, Dean Row

and Styal—Morning: Christ's Mission (Luke ii. 14)—Sacrament—Afternoon: A Lesson of the Closing Year (Eccles. xii. 1).

1860. Jan. 29, Rev. J. H. Hutton, Manchester—Morning: The nourishing soil and characteristic fruits of Christian Wisdom (Prov. iv. 7). Afternoon: Contentment (Philip. iv. 11).

Feb. 26, Rev. John H. Thom, Liverpool—Morning: Undue reliance on the Outward (Matt. xxiv. 26). Afternoon: The Communion of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

March 25, Rev. John Gordon, Dukinfield—Morning: Wherewith shall I come before the Lord? (Micah vi. 6). Afternoon: Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's (Romans xiv. 8).

April 29, Rev. Charles Beard, B.A., Hyde—Morning: Abhorrence of Evil (Rom. xii. 9). Afternoon: The Christian Pilgrimage (Psalm lxxxiv. 5—7).

May 27, Rev. Joseph Ashton, Stockport—Morning: Pure Religion and undefiled before God and the Father (James i. 27). Afternoon: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (2 Cor. v. 17).

June 24, Rev. James Whitehead, Altringham—Morning: Prayer (1 Thess. v. 17). Afternoon: One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren (Matt. xxiii. 8).

Morning service at 10. 45. Afternoon service at 3 o'clock.

AUSTRALIA.

The following extract from a letter recently received from Rev. J. C. Woods, of Adelaide, will give our readers some idea of the satisfactory progress Unitarianism is making in that colony:

"I am happy to be able to inform you of the continued prosperity of the Adelaide congregation, and to bear my testimony to the zeal, earnestness, liberality and exemplary lives of its members. During the last year we have lost some valuable friends who have gone away from the colony, but their places have been filled up by others. I may mention that during that period a Juvenile Library has been established, and will, I am convinced, be the means of much usefulness, assisting and stimulating parents as well as interesting and instructing children. I continue to give monthly expository lectures, which are always well attended, and frequently publishing articles in a Trinitarian magazine here, called the 'Christian Advocate.' This fact I regard as a proof that a spirit of fairness prevails in Australia. These lectures, it should be noted, are decidedly Unitarian, not merely in spirit, but in distinct statement."

OBITUARY.

Recently, at Carisbrook, Victoria, Mr. JOHN HENRY PACE, aged 45, formerly of Adelaide, and a member of the Unitarian church there. Mr. Pace was originally connected with the Society of Friends. When public Unitarian worship was established in Adelaide, he consented to accompany his wife, a Unitarian, to one service in the day under Mr. Woods' administration, on the condition that she would go with him to another at the Episcopalian church. He gradually changed his views on many points under this plan, and soon began to attend the Unitarian service twice on the Sunday—not, he said, because he was a Unitarian, but because he was more interested in what he heard there. In the course of time, he became a decided Unitarian Christian, and he attributed his change of religious conviction more to the prayers and religious discourses he heard, than to theological lectures. Mr. Pace was an upright, honourable and industrious citizen, a modest yet pleasant companion, and an affectionate husband and father. His death was at least accelerated by anxiety and over-exertion for those most dear to him.

J. C. W.

June 13, at Chowbent, ANN, widow of the late Mr. Stephen CURTIS, of Hackney, aged 76 years.

June 16, at Moreton Hampstead, in his 30th year, of consumption, Mr. SYDNEY BILLETT, ropemaker, and leader of the choir of the Unitarian congregation. He

was the last of five brothers, all of whom have had their earthly existence cut short by the same incurable malady. Two sisters, and the congregation to whose psalmody he was a great assistance, and in whose Sunday-school he regularly taught, lament his loss, but "sorrow not as others who have no hope." T. J. R.

June 17, at Sandown, Isle of Wight, CHARLOTTE, the beloved wife of Thomas GIBSON, Esq., of Clarence Terrace, Regent's Park, London, in the 86th year of her age.

July 2, after a short illness, Mrs. GREERE, Ashford Road, Maidstone, in her 87th year.

July 3, at Pymore, near Bridport, Mr. JOHN SUTTILL, aged 66 years.

July 11, aged 19, after a few days' illness, at Hafod, near St. Asaph, the residence of Rev. Charles Wicksteed, FRANCES SARAH, eldest daughter of Wm. TALBOT, Esq., Whitville, Kidderminster.

Aug. 11, at Altringham, aged 77 years, Miss CHECKLEY, daughter of the Rev. George Checkley, formerly minister of Hyde and Platt chapels.

Aug. 16, at Springfield, Upper Clapton, in the 56th year of his age, THOMAS HOWELL WATSON, Esq., late of Bridgwater.

Aug. 18, in her 61st year, CATHERINE, wife of Mr. Timothy JEVONS, Liverpool.

MARRIAGES.

June 19, at the Church of the Divine Unity, Newcastle-on-Tyne, by Rev. George Harris, Mr. JAMES CLARKE to GRACE WILKIN, both of Newcastle.

July 27, at Mill-Hill chapel, Leeds, by Rev. Thomas Hincks, B.A., LOUIS JACOBSON, Esq., of Nottingham, to LOUISA, third daughter of Edward WURTZBURG, Esq.

Aug. 4, at Barton-Street chapel, Gloucester, by Rev. Edward Whitfield, of Ilminster, Rev. JOHN GOW, B.A., of Cheltenham, to MARY, eldest daughter of Rev. J. G. TEGGIN, of Gloucester.

Aug. 8, at the Church of the Divine Unity, Newcastle-on-Tyne, by Rev. George Harris, Mr. WILLIAM HAILES to ISABELLA THOMPSON, both of Newcastle.

Aug. 16, at Dunham Massey, by Rev. J. Kingsley, ALFRED NEILD, Esq., of Bowdon, to LUCY REYNELL, second daughter of William WRETFORD, Esq., late of Bristol, and niece of J. D. Morell, Esq., one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Aug. 17, at Mill-Hill chapel, Leeds, by Rev. Thomas Hincks, B.A., JAMES EDWIN JOHNSON, Esq., to MARGARET WILKS, only daughter of L. F. BLACKETT, Esq.

Aug. 17, at the Unitarian church, Stockport, by Rev. R. Brook Aspland, M.A., uncle of the bride, FERDINAND EMANS FIELD, Esq., of Evesham, to ELLEN, only surviving daughter of the late John ALCOCK, Esq., of Gately Hill, Cheshire.